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With many curious Particulars; being, in general, the moſt authentick Account of that COUNTRY.

Written by the Learned

LEWIS LE COMTE, JESUIT;

Confeſſor to the Dutcheſs of *Burgundy*, and one of the *French* King's Mathematicians.

A New Tranſlation from the beſt *Paris* Edition, and adorn'd with COPPER-PLATES.

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The AUTHOR's Preface.

I *Know not of the two which to blame moſt, he that publiſhes haſty indigeſted relations of his travels, or the reader that runs 'em over ſlightly and heedleſly. The buſineſs of writing voyages is not altogether ſo light a task as moſt are apt to fancy; it requires not only wit and judgment, to manage it ſucceſsfully, but likewiſe ſincerity, exactneſs, and a ſimple inſinuating ſtile; and learning beſides, for as a painter, to be a maſter in his art, ought to know the propriety and force of all ſorts of colours, ſo whoever undertakes a deſcription of the people, arts and ſciences, and religions of the new world, muſt have a large ſtock of knowledge, and in a manner, an univerſal genius. That's not all neither; he muſt have been an eye-witneſs of moſt of the actions and things he reports, he muſt be skill'd in the cuſtoms and language of the inhabitants, he muſt have correſponded with thoſe of the beſt faſhion among them, and been frequently in converſation with their principal officers: In a word, to enable him to ſpeak with certainty and aſſurance of the riches, beauty, and ſtrength of an empire, he muſt have taken an actual ſurvey of the multitude of its ſubjects, the number and ſituation of the cities, the extent of its provinces, and all the remarkable rarities in the country. I confeſs indeed this is ſomething more laborious and expenſive than to frequent the company of the virtuoſi at home, or ſupinely tumble over the hiſtory of the world by the fire ſide; and yet, after ſo much fa-*

tigue, travellers of all men are the leaſt eſteemed upon the ſcore of their writings.

There's a ſet of idle people that amuſe themſelves with what paſſes daily before their eyes, and are little affected with news from remote parts of the globe. 'Tis grown a maxim with others to reject all foreign ſtories for fables; theſe value themſelves upon their incredulity, and are ſuch ſtrict friends to truth, that they never acknowledge any. Another ſort, again, throw away a book of this kind for a miracle, or ſome extraordinary accident, any thing out of the way (beyond their common prejudices) that they find in it, as tho' nature, having exhauſted all her treaſures upon our portion of the earth, could produce nothing uncommon elſewhere; or as tho' God's power were more limited in the new eaſtern churches than among us.

And ſome there are that run directly counter to theſe, who inquire after nothing but wonders, ſatisfied only with what raiſes their admiration; they think all that's natural flat and inſipid, and if they are not rouz'd up with aſtoniſhing adventures, and continual prodigies, drop aſleep over the beſt penn'd relation: now to humour ſuch creatures, one had need to caſt the world into a new figure, and give mankind other ſhapes. 'Tis certain, ſo many different taſtes are not at all to be pleas'd; hence travellers, when they come home, are as hard put to it to gain a patient hearing from their own countrymen, as they were at firſt going abroad to make themſelves be underſtood by ſtrangers. But indeed they are not always worth hearing, the emptineſs or irregularity of their relations, or elſe the vein of paſſion and prejudice running

running through the whole, that turns a hiſtory into ſlander; but above all, the boldneſs wherewith they ſham the moſt ridiculous tales upon us for credible truths, juſtly diſtaſte men of ſenſe, and render ſuſpected the more prudent and ſincere authors: tho' ordinarily it falls out, that thoſe travellers, who impoſe upon other people, were firſt deceived themſelves. How many are there, who do but juſt touch at a ſtrange country, and imagine to be immediately inform'd of all that belongs to it; they ſtep aſhore, and ſcour about like famiſh'd men, greedily catching at all that comes in their way, and ſo cram their journals with idle popular chat: upon this occaſion a Spaniard ſaid pleaſantly of a certain author, that inſtead of intituling his book, A relation of all the conſiderable rarities in the new world, *he ſhould rather have called it,* An account of what the rabble of both Indies, the moors, cafres, and ſlaves faithfully reported to me, in thoſe conferences which I duly held with them. *Others, perhaps, are more reſerved, and then 'tis ten to one they are naturally bent to magnify every thing; and really when a man has rambled five or ſix thouſand leagues, out of pure curioſity, 'twould fret him, after all, to meet with nothing but what he has ſeen fifty times over in Europe; then, without a ſpecial caution, one is apt to ſet too mighty a character and eſteem upon the climate, the cuſtoms, and the wit of the people, and what at the bottom is moſt barbarous becomes moſt raviſhing; now in writing to others what we admire beforehand ourſelves, the ideas are heighten'd in the deſcription, and in the end grow monſtrous; and* *all this to tickle the reader, forſooth, or our own vanity, with being firſt in a relation. I have known ſome very ſcrupulous this way in appearance, but in effect no leſs wide of the mark than their neighbours, who ſtedfaſtly believe themſelves honeſt in their aſſertions, but moſt unluckily make an ill choice of terms and modes of expreſſion. To ſpeak intelligibly, we read every day one or other, that tells us of certain kingdoms in the Indies, much after the rate that we talk of thoſe in Europe; the metropolitan cities, the counties, the government of frontier places, the palace, the miniſters of ſtate, the generals of armies, and a hundred other terms of that ſtamp, preſently we think ourſelves at another Paris, Verſailles, or in our formidable armies; and when all comes to all, this ſame Louvre of a palace is neither better nor worſe than a rambling, ill contriv'd, wooden building; the courtiers a crew of ſorry wretches half naked; the viceroys, it may be, have fifteen or twenty petty villages under their government, ſcattered up and down in the woods, and ſo of the reſt. Undoubtedly theſe terms, that repreſent ſuch grand ideas to us, are very improperly uſed to ſignify ſuch pitiful kingdoms, that have almoſt nothing common with ours, but the name; 'tis my opinion we ought to manage them warily and skilfully, leſt we ſhould lie in telling the truth. But when the country we treat of has in good earneſt ſomething noble and ſingular in it, we are ſtill apter to miſcarry; then we are not content barely to draw eſteem from our readers, we covet their admiration too; in this caſe a man muſt ſtand upon his guard againſt his own evi-*

dence, and deal with it juſt as thoſe modeſt perſons who in their judgment retrench half the merit their own imagination ſuggeſts to 'em, leſt they ſhould overvalue themſelves. Upon the whole, we ought not to be ſo violently prepoſſeſſed againſt relations of voyages, as to put good and bad under the ſame condemnation; for as on one hand it were indiſcreet to take up with all that come out without choice, examination, or diſtinction; ſo on the other hand 'tis as fooliſh an affectation, to reject indifferently the accounts of travellers whoſe diſintereſt, condition, and capacity recommend their credit. For my part, notwithſtanding I have conſtantly cheriſh'd a ſteddy affection for truth, I durſt not venture to put together an intire ſtory of all that came to my knowledge during a long abode in the empire of China, apprehending leſt the want of other qualifications, neceſſary in ſuch a work, ſhould hardly be aton'd for by that ſingle virtue; nevertheleſs, not knowing well how to contain myſelf altogether at my return from ſo far a country, and being leſs able to forbear publiſhing the progreſs of religion in the Eaſt, I confeſs I have been extremely delighted in communicating myſelf on that ſubject to ſeveral perſons of quality, well affected to our holy faith; and being under an obligation to render an account of my voyage to ſome, or in obedience to the expreſs commands of others; or laſtly, to make a return for the civility and good offices done me by the reſt, I wrote the following letters (being an abridgment of thoſe particular converſations they have honour'd me with) which comprehend, in great part, the preſent ſtate of China;

and I conceived, in publiſhing this collection, not as a regular univerſal account of that vaſt empire, but as memoirs and heads for a general hiſtory, they might not be unſerviceable to thoſe who might one time or other take up ſuch a deſign; mean time, I may well fear, that the ſame things, which ſeem'd tolerable in diſcourſe, will not paſs ſo currently upon a nearer view; faults are ever eaſieſt diſcovered in writing, and that looſe irregularity, which makes up the pleaſure of converſation, will hardly be forgiven here: but to conclude, a man that has endeavour'd ten years together to forget his mother tongue, and to load his memory with barbarous words and uncouth ideas, whatever he may have loſt another way, ought to be allowed the privilege of writing ill; after we have cut the line four or five times, methinks our ſtile ſhould not be canvas'd by the criticks, and, for ought I know, politeneſs in a miſſionary would be leſs edifying than negligence.

THE Preſent State OF CHINA.

A Letter to my Lord PONTCHARTRAIN, *Secretary of State to his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty.*

The Voyage from Siam *to* Pekin.

My Lord,

THO' travellers at their return are very fond of telling their ſtory, and I am pretty well aſſured, that a relation from China cannot fail of being at once both uſeful and entertaining; yet I could never once reſolve upon writing a formal account of my voyage thither. That ſubject, indeed, is worn ſo threadbare, that people have little or no curioſity after new relations; and the world, moreover, is ſufficiently taken up with the buſineſs of the times: the wars, negotiations, and deſigns now carrying on in Europe, divert them from enquiring into the affairs of remote countries.

But you, my lord (whoſe underſtanding is as extenſive as your zeal, and who no leſs rejoice at victories obtain'd by Chriſt's doctrine over idolatry, than at thoſe by our arms) will, I dare hope, give us his miniſters a patient hearing. I have already had the honour to be heard by you on this ſubject at leiſure hours; and I may ſay, that next to thoſe divine helps which ſupport us in all our labours, nothing could more animate our induſtry, than that goodneſs with which you are pleaſed to give it encouragement.

The project of ſending miſſionaries, ſkill'd in the mathematicks, into the utmoſt parts of the world, was thought ſo glorious to his majeſty's reign, and ſo advantageous to religion, that his miniſters have ever uſed their beſt endeavours to promote it.

Monſieur Colbert not only obtain'd his majeſty's approbation, but alſo his orders for the preparing neceſſary inſtruments, for a conſiderable number of mathematicians, bound for China; ſome thro' Muſcovy and Tartary, others thro' Syria and Perſia, and the reſt on board the veſſels belonging to the Eaſt-India company.

His death put ſome ſtop to this great deſign, but the marquis de Louvois no ſooner ſucceeded him, as ſuperintendent of arts and ſciences, than by order from his majeſty he commanded our ſuperiors to look out men, whoſe zeal and capacity render'd them able for ſuch an undertaking; and for them he procured all ſorts of inſtruments, together with money, letters of commendation, and, in a word, whatever might contribute to the ſucceſs of the deſign.

Monſieur De Seignelay, judging that theſe new miſſions needed the ſupport of the admiralty, deſired they might be intruſted to his care; but tho' monſieur De Louvois gave up to him the management of them; yet he did not wholly abandon them, but largely and bountifully contributed to the ſhortening their journey thro' Poland, Ruſſia, Siberia, and the greater Tartary to the eaſtern ocean.

Thus, my lord, has providence led three great men to forward ſo noble a work, the perfecting of which it has left to you. The ſeveral reaſons which induced them to it will, doubtleſs, be as prevalent with your lordſhip, who are no leſs deſirous of the honour of religion, the glory of our king, and the advantage of his ſubjects, and no leſs careful in your employments, with reſpect both to arts and ſciences, and trade and navigation.

Your protection has, hitherto, been ſo benevolent to thoſe zealous miſſionaries, that they cannot doubt of a happy ſucceſs.

But beſides this acknowledgment, they are bound to give you an exact account of their actions, their travels, and the uſe they have made of his majeſty's bounty. Theſe memoirs, my lord, I offer to you on their behalf.

The king, about ten years ſince, commanded ſix of his ſubjects, jeſuits, for China, with the character of his majeſty's mathematicians, that, by teaching theſe ſciences, they might take occaſion to promote the goſpel. I was one of them, and ſet ſail with the reſt in the beginning of the year 1685, in the ſame ſhip, on board which was monſieur Chaumont, ſent by his majeſty on an extraordinary ambaſſy to the court of Siam.

Our voyage thither was very fortunate, but the ſeaſon forbad our going farther; and we were detained there near a twelve-month, till the time of year proper for our deſign.

The king of Siam, a pretender to aſtrology, deſired to be a ſharer in our aſtronomical obſervations. He, above all, admired our exactneſs in fore-telling an eclipſe of the moon, which led him to entertain thoughts of keeping us at his court. But having inform'd him, what our orders were, he conſented that four of us ſhould depart for China, provided father Tachard ſhould return to France, to requeſt the king for more mathematicians, and that I in the interim ſhould remain with him.

Accordingly he went for Europe, and I continued at Siam, while the fathers Fontaney Gerbillon, De Viſdelon, and Bouvet took ſhip for Macao, a ſmall city, ſituated on the point of an iſland on the coaſts of China, where the Portugueze have a fortreſs.

Father Tachard arrived ſafe at Paris, with the Siamite ambaſſadors: but thoſe, who ſailed for China, were, in a few days after their departure, ſurpriſed by a tempeſt which put a ſtop to their voyage; they were in a ſtout veſſel of monſieur Conſtance's, but it ſuffered ſo much in the ſtorm, that in a little time it began to be leaky.

The ſhipwreck being inevitable, it was thought better to ſtrand on the ſhore with ſome hopes of life, than by loofing up againſt the wind to keep the ſea, and founder in a deſperate condition; ſo before night they reached an unknown land. The ſhip often run upon ſhoals, but did not ſplit; and with much difficulty they got to the leeward of an iſland near Caſſonett, a province of the kingdom of Siam, bordering upon that of Camboja.

The captain then deſpaired of proceeding in his voyage, being fallen under a wind, which according to the ſeaſon was like to keep the ſame corner for ſeveral months, and hindered him from doubling the cape of Camboja, eſpecially ſince the ſhip was extremely diſabled.

The miſſionaries more concerned at the loſs of time, than the danger they had eſcaped, reſolved upon returning to Siam by land, deſigning there to go on board an Engliſh veſſel bound for Canton, which was to ſail about the beginning of Auguſt. They entered the woods, in hopes of meeting with a town and ſome guides to conduct them; but they ſoon loſt their way, and encountered no leſs perils at land than before at ſea. The great rains had cauſed a land-flood, ſo that, walking barefoot thro' the fields which were overflowed, an innumerable quantity of leeches, and muſketoes ſo troubleſome to ſtrangers, were their continual torment. On the other hand a great number of ſerpents, tigers, buffles, and elephants, of which the foreſts are full, kept them under continual apprehenſions.

But their greateſt miſery was want of food; for, the little victuals they had brought out with them being ſoon ſpent, they muſt have been ſtarved, had not providence directed them to a ſmall village. Not that the inhabitants could afford them much relief, being themſelves unprovided of all things; but they conducted them back again to their ſhip, where they arrived after a fortnight's wandering, half-dead with wearineſs and hunger.

As for me, I was almoſt in as ill a condition: I had prevailed upon monſieur Conſtance to place me in a convent of Talapoins (ſo their prieſts are called) of whom not one had yet embraced chriſtianity, tho' their converſion might be an effectual means to bring about that of the whole nation. I knew no ſteps more proper to be taken, to this purpoſe, than free converſation with them, and conforming my ſelf to their dreſſes, and auſterity of life. This method proved effectual at Madura; from whence I concluded, that there was no leſs reaſon to expect the like ſucceſs at Siam. But the conſpiracy of the

Malais and Macaſſars, which happened at that time, gave monſieur Conſtance ſo much trouble, that he had no leiſure to think of me. The king who countenanced the chriſtian faith, and his miniſter, who was its chief ſupport, with all thoſe who profeſſed it, were in danger of being murthered in one night, had not our Redeemer ſaved us from that peril; but the plot was diſcovered, and the criminals brought to a condign puniſhment.

On account of this accident, the fathers returned by ſea to Siam, before I was very far engaged in the new life I reſolved to lead; and at their earneſt ſolicitation I conſented to embark with them, when the ſeaſon ſhould permit; and the more willingly, becauſe it was about the time that father Tachard was to return with a recruit of miſſionaries and mathematicians.

On the 17th of June, in the year 1687, we ſailed for Nimpo, a conſiderable city and haven in Chekiam, a province of Macao; for we thought it improper to go to Macao, as was deſigned the year before, having been informed, that the Portugueze would not afford us a welcome reception.

I hardly believe, my lord, that you are over curious of knowing how we ſteered our courſe. Journals wholly made up of eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, and a thouſand barbarous words, which ſeem only proper for huffing and hectoring the winds, can ſcarce be reliſh'd by ſo nice a palate as yours; which nevertheleſs are very uſeful to ſeamen, and thoſe, who make navigation their ſtudy, would not find ſuch a ſtile unpleaſant. But I ſhall take another opportunity of giving you an account of it, in offering you ſome geographical memoirs. Permit me then to wave this for the preſent, and to ſpeak only of what concerned ourſelves.

Altho' the king of Siam gave expreſs orders for our good treatment, God was pleaſed in his wiſdom to give us an occaſion of exerciſing our patience. We were on board a ſmall Chineſe veſſel, called a Somme by the Portugueze, without any ſhelter againſt the weather, and ſo ſtreightened for want of room, that we could not lie at length; placed near an idol, black with the ſmoak of a lamp continually burning in its honour, and, which did not a little offend us, worſhipped every day with a diabolical ſuperſtition. The ſun was directly over our heads, and we had ſcarce any water to quench our immoderate thirſt, which the exceſſive heat of the climate brought upon us. Three meals of rice were our daily allowance, tho' the captain, I confeſs, often invited us to eat ſome meat with him; but that being always firſt offered as a ſacrifice to the idol, we looked on it rather with horror than appetite. In this manner we ſpent above a month, endeavouring, by our patience and prayers, to inſpire thoſe idolatrous people with an eſteem for our holy religion, our ſmall acquaintance with their language not permitting us to do it by declaring its moſt ſacred truths.

'Tis true, we ſometimes, with the help of an interpreter, attempted to convince them of the abſurdity of that worſhip they were unfortunately engaged in, by means of their education. One day eſpecially they flocked about us; the diſpute grew ſharp, and, at length, ſo hot, that we were conſtrained to drop it. All ſeamen are generally very obſtinate; and ours took great offence at what we had ſaid of their idol, and, ſoon after, advanced towards us, with threatening aſpects, armed with lances and half-pikes.

We impatiently expected the event, but found, at laſt, there was no reaſon to fear. The mariners had armed themſelves only to prepare for a proceſſion, in honour of their idol; perhaps to appeaſe the anger ſhe might have conceived at the rude treatment which ſhe received from us in the late diſpute. I ſcarce believe there is a nation more ſuperſtitious than the Chineſe, who worſhip the very compaſs they ſteer by, continually cenſing it with perfumes, and often offering it meat as a ſacrifice. Twice a day regularly they threw little pieces of gilt paper, like money, into the ſea, as it were to keep it at their devotion. Sometimes they would preſent it with little boats made of the ſame ſtuff, that, being employed in toſſing and ruining them, ſhe might have no leiſure to annoy us. But when the unruly element ſlighted this kindneſs, and became troubleſome, being, as they believed, agitated in an extraordinary manner by a Dæmon that governs it; they burned ſome feathers, whoſe noiſome ſmoak and peſtiferous ſcent were, indeed, more than ſufficient, to ſend the fiend going, were he the cauſe, had he been endowed with ſenſe.

Paſſing once near a hill on which one of their temples is built, their ſuperſtition then out-did itſelf; for, beſides the uſual ceremonies, conſiſting in meat-offerings, burning of candles and perfumes, throwing little baubles of gilt paper into the ſea, and infinite other fopperies, all hands were at work, for five or ſix hours together, in making a little veſſel, in the likeneſs of ours, of about four feet in length. It was very artificially wrought, wanting neither maſts, tackling, ſails, nor flags; it had its compaſs, rudder, and ſhalop, its arms, kitchin-ſtuff, victuals, cargo, and book of accompts. Beſides, they had daubed as many ſmall pieces of paper, as we were men in the ſhip, and diſpoſed of them in our places. This machine, being placed on two ſtaves, was, with great ceremony, at the noiſe of a tabor and a brazen baſon, raiſed up in view of all the crew. A ſeaman, in a Bonze's habit, was the principal perſon among them, playing ſeveral apiſh tricks with a quarter-ſtaff, and, now and then, ſhouting forth loud huzza's. At length the myſterious toy was committed to the waves, and ey'd as far as ſight could reach, accompanied with the Bonze's acclamations, who roared with all his might. This ridiculous entertainment diverted the ſailors, while we were ſtruck with a ſenſible grief to behold their blind error, which it was out of our power to remove.

An accident happened ſoon after, which, at firſt, gave them leſs pleaſure, but, in the end, proved an equal diverſion to us all. The mariners imagined they ſaw a ſhip in a part of the ſea much infeſted with pyrates. They had excellent ſpying-glaſſes, thro' which they could perceive the maſts and ſails; nay, ſome ſaw the very tackling, and, from the manner of her ſailing, it was plain ſhe deſigned us a viſit. All were very diligent in putting their ſhip in a poſture of defence: the Chineſe, who, of all men, love beſt to ſleep in a whole ſkin, were in extreme conſternation; we ſaw fear painted in their faces, while they made ready their ſcymeters, pikes, and guns, for they had no cannon. This terrified us more than the fancied enemy, which yet cauſed in us no little apprehenſion; for I muſt ingenuouſly own, we were then grown as fearful, if poſſible, as the Chineſe themſelves. Religion or martyrdom was not then the thing in queſtion; we were in danger of being ſtrangled by villains, who give no quarter, according to their cuſtom, which they would hardly have altered for our ſakes. The only remedy would have been, to have leaped into the ſea, and, by drowning ourſelves, deferred our end for a few minutes; but the medicine was ſomewhat violent, and we did not care to try the experiment. Our proſpective-glaſſes were often uſed, and, to our great ſurprize, the mighty veſſel, as it came near us, leſſened, as did our ill-grounded terror, for we now doubted whether it was a ſhip. At length it grew a floating iſland, then a ſea-horſe, and then I know not what; till at laſt it came in view, and proved to be a tree, which a violent wind had torn from the coaſt. The earth and pebbles about its root occaſioned it to ſwim upright, ſo that its trunk, which was very high, reſembled a maſt; and ſome branches ſpread on each ſide for a yard, with leſſer boughs broken down for ropes, had, with the help of the wind and the ſea's beating about it, which formed a tract not unlike that of a ſhip, thus cauſeleſly alarmed us; moreover, people who trembled, as they looked thro' their glaſſes, might eaſily be deceived.

The dreadful enemy was no ſooner known, but the preparations were given over, to their great ſeeming grief, who then deſired nothing more than a battle, and were heartily vexed at the diſappointment. But we much ſuſpecting their courage was counterfeit, ſince it did not appear till all the danger was vaniſhed, thought not ourſelves ſafe until we were landed.

This was not the only peril we were likely to encounter; for we were ſcarce in ſight of Emouis, an iſland of China, famous for the commodiouſneſs of its harbour, and the abundance of ſhips of all nations reſorting thither, when the ſudden veering of the wind, followed by a calm, and black clouds, which on every ſide darkened our horizon, cauſed the pilots to fear the approach of ſome Typhon, than which nothing is more terrible in the ſeas of China and Japan; for, unleſs the captain be ſkilful, the crew numerous, and the veſſel ſtout, their ruin is moſt certain. This Typhon is a furious wind, or rather a blowing of all the winds at once; ſo that the waves, confuſedly rolling one upon another, beſet a ſhip on all ſides, and toſs it with the utmoſt rage and fury. This wind is ſo violent, that there is no bearing any ſail; and ſo obſtinate, that the third day ſcarce ſees the end of it. At firſt the ſeamens pains and induſtry may a little withſtand the ſtorm, but continual labour tires and diſheartens them; they yield to the over-ruling winds, the maſts break, the rudder is carried off, and the ſhip founders; or, if ſhe be ſo well built as to ſuſtain the fury of the waves, ſhe ſplits againſt a rock, and not a man eſcapes.

Four days had been ſpent, in expectation of the like fate; and the dreadful omens increaſed, when it came into our minds to addreſs St. Francis Xavier, whoſe miracles had once rendered thoſe ſeas ſo famous. We prayed him to divert the tempeſt, and inforced our prayers by a vow. Scarce were we off our knees, but, whether by a miracle, or the ordinary courſe of nature, there blew a favourable gale of wind, which carried us thro' ſome iſlands into our deſired port.

I never ſaw any thing ſo frightful, as that infinite number of rocks and deſert iſlands thro' which we were obliged to paſs. The channels are in ſome places ſo narrow, as not to exceed ten paces in breadth, to the great danger of thoſe who ſail thro' them: we alſo ſteer'd thro' a pretty wide bay, in which the Chineſe obſerve a profound ſilence, for fear, they tell us, of diſturbing a neighbouring dragon; we were conſtrained to follow their example. I know not how they call it; as for us, we named it the Dumb Man's Bay.

Having ſpent ſome time among thoſe horrid rocks, we at laſt had ſight of a little city called Tim-hai, that is, Sea's Limit, ſituated at the mouth of the river, up which we tided, and dropp'd anchor three miles higher, near the city of Nimpo, which we had earneſtly longed to ſee, during a ſix and thirty days voyage, rendered extremely tedious, on account of the dangers and hardſhips to which we were daily expoſed.

It was with tranſporting joy we reached that land, in which we had, during ſo many years, ardently deſired to preach the goſpel. The ſight of it inſpired us with an unuſual zeal, and the joy of viewing that happy ſoil, which ſo many good men had conſecrated by their labours, we thought an ample amends for ours.

However, it was not ſo eaſy to enter, tho' we were ſo near the city. China is a very ceremonious country, wherein all ſtrangers, but eſpecially the French, have occaſion for a good ſtock of patience. The captain of our veſſel thought fit to conceal us, and, on our arrival, we were let down into the hold, where the heat, which increaſed the nearer we approached the land, and ſeveral other inconveniencies, rendered our condition almoſt inſupportable. But, in ſpite of all precaution, we were diſcovered; an officer of the cuſtoms ſpied us, and, having taken an account of the ſhip's cargo, ſet a man in her, and withdrew to inform his maſter. This Mandarine who holds his commiſſion immediately from court, and is therefore much reſpected, ordered us to be brought before him, whom we found in a large hall, aſſiſted by his aſſeſſors, and other inferior officers; we were waited on thither by a multitude of people, who are there more curious of ſeeing an European, than we ſhould be here of viewing a Chineſe.

No ſooner were we enter'd, but we were admoniſhed to kneel, and bow our heads nine times to the ground, that being the cuſtom in thoſe parts of doing obeiſance to the prime Mandarine, who, in that quality, repreſents the emperor's perſon. His countenance was very ſevere, bearing a gravity that challenged veneration, and a dread, which increaſed at the ſight of his executioners, who, like Roman lictors, attended with chains and great ſticks, in a readineſs to bind and cudgel whom his Mandarineſhip pleaſed.

Having paid him our duty, he aſked us who we were, and what was our errand. *My Lord* (anſwered we, by the means of our interpreter) *we have heard in* Europe, *that ſeveral of our brethren, and particularly father* Verbieſt, *laboured with ſucceſs to ſpread the knowledge of our holy religion in theſe remote parts; the ſame zeal has moved us, and the noble idea we have form'd of this empire, and of the wit and politeneſs of its inhabitants, has engaged us to procure them the only thing that is wanting to compleat the grandeur of ſo flouriſhing and renowned a nation*, viz. *the knowledge of THE ONLY TRUE GOD, without which it cannot be truly great. We have beſides underſtood how kind his imperial majeſty has been to them, and hope his Mandarines, who are no ſtrangers to his intentions, will be ſo favourable as not to moleſt us.*

This declaration ſeemed ſomewhat bold, in a province where our religion was ſcarce tolerated, and in a city where there was not one chriſtian. But our ignorance hereof inclined us to think, that, ſince the freedom of trade had been granted, ſtrangers might come and ſettle there, which is directly oppoſite to the laws of the land. The Mandarine, who, queſtionleſs, was ſurprized at our freedom of ſpeech, diſſembled his thoughts, and, as if he approved of our zeal, told us it was true, the emperor had a particular eſteem for father Verbieſt, whoſe merit was notorious in all parts of the empire, and that he himſelf was very deſirous to ſerve us; but, continued he, *I muſt firſt adviſe with the governor, and we ſhall conſider of it together: in the mean while return to your ſhip, where you ſhall hear farther from us.*

Some days after the general of the militia in and about the city, conſiſting of about fifteen or twenty thouſand men, was willing to ſee us, and entertained us in a moſt obliging manner, inſomuch that, when we left him to wait upon the governor, he ſent an officer to deſire him that he would uſe us kindly, aſſuring him we were very honeſt people. The governor expreſſed ſome regard for us, but ſaid he could determine nothing in our caſe, till he had firſt conferred with the chief officers of the city; ſo that we were forced again on board our hated ſhip, which ſeemed to us an extremely ſevere priſon.

Moſt of us were ſick, but our lord, who permitted theſe delays, to try our patience, did at laſt ſoften the hardened hearts of theſe infidels, who took compaſſion upon us. Eight days being ſpent in conſultations, the Mandarine of the cuſtoms held his court in a houſe not far from the port, where his clerks uſually kept their office. Having there ſent for us and our goods, being ſeveral bales of books, images, and mathematical inſtruments, they opened but three of our trunks, without demanding any cuſtom; and his lordſhip told us, we might lodge in the ſuburbs till they had heard from the viceroy, to whom the governor had wrote concerning us. We thankfully accepted of his civility, and, in our new habitation, enjoyed a reſt we greatly wanted.

Permit me, my lord, before I proceed, to give you a general deſcription of that great empire, framed according to the obſervations of antient geographers, and rectified by thoſe we have ſince made with much care and exactneſs.

CHINA, which the inhabitants call Tchoumcoevé, the middle kingdom, becauſe they formerly thought themſelves ſeated in the midſt of the world, is divided into fifteen very large provinces. Quantum, Fokien, Chekiam, Nankim, Xantum and Pekin lie along the eaſtern ocean, from ſouth to north; and, from north to ſouth on the weſtern ſide, are extended Xanſi, Xenſi, Sucheun, Yunnan and Quamſi; and then Queycheu, Kianſi, Huquam and Honan are encompaſſed by the other eleven, and from the midſt of the empire, which a channel divides from Japan and the iſland Formoſa, and a very long wall from Tartary.

Here, my lord, I muſt intreat your patience a while, to give you an exact account of its ſituation, and remind you of two conſiderable faults geographers are guilty of: the firſt whereof is, that they have miſplaced the whole province Leaotum within the wall; whereas it is undoubtedly without, tho' it ever made part of the Chineſe dominions. This is matter of fact, and whoever diſputes it need only take a journey thither, as we did, to be fully convinced. The ſecond is, that they place the whole empire five hundred leagues more eaſtward than it really is; this is not ſo palpable a miſtake as the former, but clearly demonſtrable by our obſervations; ſo that China is much nearer Europe than it has been hitherto imagined.

If ſucceeding obſervators could but bring it each journey ſo many leagues nearer, our voyages would ſoon be ſhortened, and thoſe, who are ſo fond of ſeeing unknown countries, might with eaſe ſatisfy their deſires; but the miſchief is, that it is out of their power. And I dare ſay, our obſervations, and thoſe of the royal academy of ſciences, will ſcarce be ſurpaſſed, unleſs Mr. V—, who has ſo much inveighed againſt our manner of proceeding herein, undertakes that difficult taſk; then indeed I ſhould not deſpair, if he gives us a map of his travels, of ſeeing China beyond Japan, or Japan near Mexico.

Beſides theſe two fundamental errors, they have failed in the ſituation of each particular city; but a fuller account would be too tedious to inſert here, and may beſides be expected from father Gouye, a mathematician of our king's college, with whom I have left our geographical obſervations, which he will ſhortly produce to the world. However, my lord, be pleaſed that I give you the true extent of the empire: From the city of Canton, which we place a little above the 23d degree to Pekin, which lies in the 40th, there are from north to ſouth 17 degrees; but we may reckon 18, becauſe beyond Pekin and Canton to the utmoſt bounds is 20 leagues more: Theſe 18 degrees amount to 450 common leagues, and are the intire length of that country. Its extent from eaſt to weſt is little leſs; ſo that on the whole China which is almoſt of a circular figure, is very near fourteen hundred leagues in circuit. This account, my lord, I can warrant to be juſt, and grounded on very exact obſervation.

. You ſee, my lord, that I have taken no notice of Formoſa, Haynan, and other iſlands of inferior note, which of themſelves would make a very great kingdom; as alſo all the province of Leaotum, becauſe it is without the wall. As for the Corea, Tumkim, and Siam, they depend, I confeſs, ſo far on China as that they pay tribute to that crown, and their kings, at their admiſſion, are confirmed by its emperor; but they are ſeparate kingdoms, and exceedingly differ from that of China, which is quite another thing, whether we conſider the product and fertility of its ſoil, the beauty and numbers of its cities, or the wit, politeneſs, religion, and manners of its inhabitants. The Chineſe know it, and are ſo proud of it, that that they call all the reſt barbarous nations, taking great care in their marriages not to match with them, or any of the other Indians, fearing nothing more than that their mean blood ſhould run in a noble Chineſe's veins.

I alſo omitted a great part of Tartary, which belongs to this ſtate, to the great increaſe of its power, for the Tartars are valiant, and withal men of ſenſe; and beſides, tho' Tartary be full of woods and ſandy deſarts, yet it is not wholly unfruitful; thoſe fine furs of which they rob their zibelines, foxes and tigers; a great diverſity of ſimples uſed in phyſick, and the fine horſes which come from thence, are commodities China could not be without. Yet tho' they reap ſo great a profit by, it cannot be imagined what a vexation it is to them to be ſo ſtrictly united and mixt with that nation; and one muſt be well acquainted with the exceſs of their vanity, and of the conceit they have of their grandeur,to know how grievouſly the Tartarian conqueſt has humbled them. I queſtion not, my lord, but you have heard of it, but perhaps have not had the leiſure of inquiring into particulars, and therefore a ſhort account of that great revolution may not be unwelcome.

One of the petty kings of the eaſtern Tartary (for there are not a few) whoſe ſubjects, call'd Mouantchéou,had ſettled a trade near the long wall, having complained at Pekin of ſome knaveries committed by the Chineſe merchants, and having received no ſatisfaction, reſolved to right himſelf, and entered the province of Leaotum with a numerous army. The emperor preſently ſent ſome part of his forces to oppoſe him, and the war continued ſome time, with equal advantage. But one L. I. a Chineſe took that opportunity to hatch a rebellion in the provinces which were moſt remote from court. Great numbers of malecontents flock'd about him, who having made themſelves maſters of the greateſt cities, like a torrent, overflow'd the whole country, driving all down before them.

The ſacred preſence of their emperor could not ſave Pekin from their fury; the rebel, who knew the beſt forces were drawn out of it, marched directly to attack it. There was indeed a garriſon of ſeventy thouſand men, but moſt gain'd upon by the practices of L. I's emiſſaries; ſo that while ſome with a pretended zeal perſuaded the prince to remain in his palace, others opened the city gates to the traytor, who ſolemnized his entry by a cruel ſlaughter. The unfortunate monarch, finding himſelf betrayed, would have marched out againſt him with ſix hundred guards, who ſtill remained with him; but at the mentioning of his heroick propoſal their hearts failed them, and they baſely abandoned him. Then fearing no greater evil than that of falling quick into the hands of his enemies, he retired into a garden with an only daughter he had, and having wrote with his blood theſe words on the border of his veſt, *My ſubjects have baſely forſaken me, ſpend thy rage on my body, but ſpare my people.* He firſt ſtabbed the princeſs, whoſe tears would have ſoftened a heart of flint, and then hang'd himſelf on a tree; more unjuſt to his daughter, and cruel to himſelf, than could have been the moſt barbarous foe.

The emperor being dead, all bowed to the uſurper, except Ouſanguey (whom the late prince had intruſted with the command of the forces he had ſent againſt the Tartars) and he never would acknowledge him, and choſe rather to pull down his tyranny, than ignobly to accept of a ſhare in it. The new monarch having in vain beſieged him in the province of Leaotum, to engage him to ſurrender

render himſelf, ſhewed him his father loaded with irons, proteſting he would put him to death in his ſight, if he did not immediately ſubmit. But that generous lord, more faithful to the memory of his deceaſed prince than tender of his father's life, ſuffered the duty of a ſubject to prevail over that of a ſon; and ſeeing that blood ſpilt, of which his was once a part, reſolved to die, or revenge at once his father's and his emperor's death. He made his peace with the Tartar, who, having joined him, no ſooner enabled him to cope with his enemy, but he marched againſt him. But the tyrant, whoſe cowardiſe was even greater than his cruelty, durſt not appear againſt thoſe two armies. He fled to Pekin, where having burned the palace, and all that had not periſhed at his firſt entry, he retired into the province of Xenſi, loaded with the ſpoil of the empire and the curſe of all. He was purſued but in vain, for he met with ſo private a retirement, that all the art of man could never find him out.

In the mean while the Tartars entered Pekin, and ſo impoſed upon the poor Chineſe, that of themſelves they begged their new gueſts to take care of their diſtreſſed ſtate. The Tartars were too cunning not to improve ſo favourable an opportunity; hereupon they, either by force or policy, are ſince grown abſolute maſters of it. And here it is hard to determine which is the moſt to be wondered at, the courage and conduct of that nation, which gave them ſucceſs in ſo noble an enterprize, or the ſupineneſs or ill management of the Chineſe, who thus baſely ſubmitted to a people ſo inconſiderable for their number, that they would have been aſhamed not long before to own them for their ſubjects. So true it is we ought not to look on any thing as beneath us, ſince all temporal grandeur is ſubject to change, and nothing is conſtant in this world but inconſtancy.

The Tartarian king Tſoutè had not the leiſure to enjoy his conqueſt; ſcarce had he taken poſſeſſion but he died, leaving the adminiſtration of the government, and care of his ſon, who was then but ſix years old, to his brother. This brother of his, named AMAVAN, conquered all the provinces which had not yet ſubmitted; a prince deſervedly admired, not only for his valour and conduct, ever attended with ſucceſs, but alſo for his fidelity and moderation. For the young prince being come to age, he diſcharged his truſt, and took as much care to ſecure him in the empire, as he had done to conquer it for him.

This union of the two nations has made one empire of a prodigious extent, for tho' all Tartary does not belong to China, yet moſt is tributary to it; inſomuch, that the great and mighty CHAM, to whom the Chineſe themſelves ſometime paid tribute, is now fallen from all his grandeur. But I do not wonder how we in Europe could be miſinformed in this point, ſince Monſieur Conſtance himſelf, who ſo frequently converſed with them, knew no better. I know not upon what grounds he had credulouſly taken up a report that Tartary obeyed one ſole emperor, from whom the Chineſe defended themſelves only by preſents and money. This will make me take more care for the future, how I credit relations which are grounded on common fame.

Since the peace between Ruſſia and China, it is eaſy to give the true length of the whole empire, for on that occaſion the bounds were fixed by conſent to the 55th degree, the reſt of the land ſtretching from north to eaſt remaining ſtill undecided by that treaty. So from the moſt ſoutherly point of

Haynan to the utmoſt limits of that part of Tartary, which belongs to the emperor of China, may be reckon'd above 900 leagues. Thoſe lands are not alike fruitful, but all may yield religion a plentiful harveſt, and, were all the miſſionaries in the world employ'd in ſo vaſt a field, it would yet want for reapers.

We were well informed at Nimpo of the good we could do there, and were ready to take a ſpiritual poſſeſſion of the promiſed land, when we had intelligence that the viceroy of that province was much offended that we were ſuffered to land, and was reſolved to ſend us back to the Indies. He wrote indeed a ſharp reprimand to the governor of Nimpo, and at the ſame time an account of what had paſſed to the grand tribunal at Pekin, which is entruſted with the care of foreign affairs, and ever was averſe to the chriſtian religion. He was very partial, for tho' he was well acquainted with our deſign, he repreſented us as five Europeans, who for ſome private ends deſigned to ſettle there, in oppoſition to the fundamental laws of the realm; ſo that the court decreed we ſhould be baniſhed, and, according to cuſtom, preſented an order to that effect, deſiring the emperor to ſign it.

Had this order been confirmed, we had been undone, and in all probability, the Mandarins at Nimpo had been ſo too, for treating us ſo favourably. The viceroy, who bore as great a love to our money as he did hatred to our belief, would have ſeized our bales, and, as a puniſhment on the captain of our ſhip, confiſcated his merchandizes, and ordered him forthwith to be gone, and take us along with him; and if the captain had been ruin'd on our account, we might reaſonably look to be thrown over board by him.

Our peril was certain, had we not prevented it by our care in writing, as we were in duty bound, to father Intorcetta, an Italian miſſionary, and father general of our order in thoſe parts. Father Fontaney had alſo given father Verbieſt notice of our arrival, deſiring him that he would inſtruct us what we had to do. The father had all the reaſon in the world to leave us to ourſelves, for, by taking us under his protection, he expoſed himſelf to the anger of the viceroy of *Goa*, and the governor of *Macao*, from whom he had received letters which were neither conformable to the king of Portugal's intentions, nor to chriſtian charity. But who could have expected that a man, ever ready to ſacrifice his life for the infidels ſalvation, ſhould have looked unconcernedly on, while his brethren, who were come from the remoteſt parts of the earth to aſſiſt him in his taſk, miſerably periſhed? When he received our letters the emperor was in Tartary, ſo that he was forced to write to a friend at court, that he would inform his majeſty of our arrival, and cauſed his letter, by a wilful miſtake, to be put into a pacquet which he knew would be delivered into the emperor's own hands. It happened as he deſired, the emperor opened it and read it, ſo that being well informed of all the truth, when the tribunal's order was delivered to him, he anſwered, that he would conſider it when he returned to *Pekin*; which he did after he had hunted a fortnight. That court was ſurpriſed at the delay, it being cuſtomary for the prince, in three days time, either to ſign or cancel theſe kind of writs. Father Verbieſt was no leſs impatient to know the fate of his letter and the emperor's reſolutions; and as for us, we endeavoured by our prayers to obtain his favour, who rules the hearts of kings.

Father Intorcetta, our ſuperior, who beſt knew our ill circumſtances, did, by publick prayers in his church at Hamcheu, beg God to deliver us out of them; and firmly believing, that the cry of innocent babes is very prevalent with the divine Majeſty, gathered all the chriſtians children from ſix to ten, together into the church, where lying proſtrate on the ground, they unanimouſly lifted up their innocent hands to heaven, ſaying, * *Pour out thine indignation, O Lord, upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name; but defend thoſe who worſhip thee, and deliver not unto their enemies thy ſervants, who come hither from the extremities of the world, to confeſs thy holy name, and to ſhew forth thy praiſe.* Theſe prayers were accompanied with the tears of the whole congregation, eſpecially with thoſe of father Intorcetta, who having been ſo happy as to ſuffer chains, priſons and baniſhment for his Saviour's ſake, was moſt fit to obtain the bleſſing we begged for.

The emperor was no ſooner returned to Pekin, but father Verbieſt informed him that we were his brethren, who, by our ſkill in the mathematicks, might be uſeful to his majeſty. To which he anſwered, *If it was ſo, he ſaw no cauſe why he ſhould expel us out of his dominions.* He ſummoned his privy council, to which the princes of the blood are admitted, and with their advice and conſent decreed we ſhould all be honourably ſent for to court. An order to that effect was ſent to the Lipou (the ſame tribunal which had preſented the writ againſt us) and by them tranſmitted to the viceroy of Hamcheu: ſo that by an eſpecial providence, he, who had endeavoured to turn us ſhamefully out of China, was himſelf obliged to introduce us, and that with more advantage, than, had

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* Effunde iram tuam in Gentes quæ te non noverunt, Pſ. 58. Ne tradas beſtiis animas confitentes tibi, Pſal. 73.

had he been our friend, he could have procured us. His vexation was the greater, becauſe, without doing us any harm, he had run the riſque of incurring the emperor's diſpleaſure by his falſe informations. It was indeed no little mortification to him; and it was a fortnight before he would acquaint us with our good fortune.

In the mean while the ſtay we made at Nimpo gave us an opportunity of improving our acquaintance with the Mandarines. Some ſent us preſents, others invited us to their houſes, and all in general were very kind to us. We endeavoured to make uſe of this opportunity for their converſion from idolatry, but it is hard for ſouls wholly buried in fleſh and blood, to ſavour the things which are of God. However, the governor of the city made one ſtep towards it, which gave us great hopes; it was this:

They had for five months time been afflicted with a continual drought, ſo that their rivers, and the channels they cut out into their land to water it, were now quite dry, and a famine much apprehended. The prieſts had offered numberleſs ſacrifices, and the Mandarines left nothing undone which they thought might appeaſe the anger of the gods. They had often aſked us what methods we uſed in Europe in ſuch caſes; and being anſwered, that by humiliation, penitence, and the fervency of our prayers we moved Heaven to compaſſion, they hoped by the like means to procure their idols pity; but alas! they call'd upon *gods that have ears and cannot hear:* at laſt the governor was tired with his frequent diſappointments, and reſolved to worſhip the only God, whom all nature obeys. Having underſtood that in our houſe we had a pretty handſome chappel, in which we every day celebrated the ſacred myſteries of our religion, he ſent to us to know if we would permit him to come in ſtate, and join his prayers with ours. We anſwered, we deſired nothing more than that he ſhould worſhip as we did, and that all the city would follow his example; and aſſured him moreover, that, if he begged with faith and ſincerity, he ſhould undoubtedly obtain. We preſently went to work to put our chappel in order, and make all things ready to ſolemnize his coming, when to our great ſurprize his ſecretary came to tell us, that his lord would be with us the next day very early, being neceſſitated to meet at eight the ſame morning at a neighouring hill, where with ſome Mandarines he was to offer a ſacrifice to a dragon. In anſwer to this unexpected meſſage, we ordered our interpreter to wait on him, and make him ſenſible, that the chriſtians God was a jealous God, who would not allow of his paying to any others the honours due to himſelf alone; that his gods were ſtatues or creatures that had no power to help themſelves nor him; and that we humbly craved him to deſpiſe thoſe idle fancies, fit only to amuſe the credulous ſenſeleſs vulgar, but far beneath a man of his ſenſe and merit; and to truſt in the only God of heaven, whom his reaſon alone muſt convince him to be the true one. I really believe he was almoſt perſuaded, but he had engaged himſelf to the Mandarines, and for ſome worldly reſpect durſt not break his promiſe; ſo he worſhipped his idols, whom, doubtleſs, he had no faith in, and withdrew from the only true God, of whoſe being he was inwardly convinced.

Then, my lord, moved with indignation at their blindneſs and the devil's tyranny, ſome of us thought of imitating what St. Francis Xavier had done on ſome like occaſion, by erecting a croſs in the city under theſe conditions: Firſt, that we would prevail with Heaven to grant the rain they ſtood in ſuch want of: and ſecondly, that if we did, they ſhould pull down their idols, and own that God who ſhould have been ſo favourable, as to grant them their requeſt. Our minds were different, as was our zeal: ſome full of lively faith, which the miraculous and continual ſupport of providence, thro' the ſeveral perils we had encounter'd, had inſpired them with, could not queſtion the ſucceſs of ſo bold, but holy an undertaking: others not ſo zealous, but perſuaded that prudence ought to be our guide, where the inſpiration is not evident, were of opinion nothing ſhould be hazarded which failing might expoſe our religion. So we were content to mourn within ourſelves, and beg of God not only that he would give them rain, but that celeſtial fire alſo, which our Saviour hath brought into the world, and deſires all nations may be inflamed with.

While we were thus buſied in promoting the intereſt of our religion, the viceroy was no leſs in thinking how to execute the orders he had received from court. He left our journey, as far as Hamcheu, to the governor's care, who provided boats for us, and commanded an inferior Mandarine to attend us, that we might lack for nothing. We performed it in five days time, without meeting with any of thoſe accidents which ſtrangers there are ſubject to when they are thought to carry things of value with them. The chriſtians at Hamcheu were laviſh in the expreſſions of their affection to us. They came in crowds to the river, whence we were carried as in triumph to their church, with more kindneſs perhaps than prudence. For they had, unknown to father Intorcetta, provided for each of us an elbow-chair, borne by four men, and attended by as many, into which we were forced to ſuffer ourſelves to be ſet, not knowing what they meant, for our little ſkill in their language did not permit us to learn it from themſelves. Having locked us in, we were forced to make our entry as they would have it, which was in this manner: A muſick of ten or twelve hands with ſome trumpets led the van; next came ſome horſe and foot, the former bearing ſeveral ſtandards and flags, and the latter armed with lances and pikes; and next to theſe four officers who ſupported a large board varniſhed with red, on which theſe words were written in large golden characters, *Doctors of the heavenly law, ſent for to court.* We came in the rear, ſurrounded by a throng of chriſtians and Gentiles, whom the novelty of the ſhow had drawn thither. In this uneaſy pomp we went thro' the whole city, being a long league in length, vexed that we had not foreſeen their indiſcretion, and reſolved to reprimand them for it. Father Intorcetta waited for us at the church-door, whence he carried us to the altar. There having nine times bowed ourſelves to the ground, and returned thanks to the good God, who thro' ſo many hazards had, in ſpite of our enemies, brought us to the promiſed land, we returned to the chief of the chriſtians. We deſired the father to acquaint them, that we were not unthankful for their love, nor ill ſatisfied with their zeal for God's glory, but that the ſplendid manner, in which they had received us, was no ways conformable to a chriſtian's humility; * *That the heathen might, indeed, celebrate their triumphs with ſuch earthly pomps and mundane vanities, but that a chriſtian's glorying was in the name of the Lord.* They returned no anſwer, but all on their knees implored our bleſſing. Their fervency accompanied with a meek and devout look, in which the Chineſe do, when they will, exceed all other nations, wholly diſarmed our wrath; we wept for joy and compaſſion; and I proteſt, my lord, that one moment made us a large amends for all the troubles we had undergone.

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* Hi in curris & in equis, nos autem in nomine Domini.

But how great was our bliſs when we were at liberty to receive the careſſes of father Intorcetta, whom God had made uſe of to procure our admittance into that empire. We already bore him a veneration due to the glorious name of confeſſor, which his impriſonment and ſufferings at *Pekin* had intituled him to; but his goodneſs, meekneſs, and charity entirely won our hearts and made us reſpect him, as the true pattern of a perfect miſſionary. The character we bore of perſons ſent for to court, a character no leſs than that of envoy, obliged us to viſit and be viſited by the chief Mandarines. The viceroy our enemy was aſhamed to ſee us; he ſent us word, that thro' the multitude of buſineſs he had then on his hands, he could not find leiſure to wait upon us: but the general of the Tartars received us with all civility, and, among other demonſtrations of his kindneſs, made us a very conſiderable preſent.

However, when we were going, the viceroy, who was afraid leſt he ſhould be informed againſt, ſent ſome chairs to carry us to the imperial barge provided for us; he ordered ſome trumpets and hautboys to attend us, preſented us with ten piſtoles, and gave us an eſpecial order from court intituled a Cam-ho, in purſuance to which all places we paſſed thro' were to find us boats well manned, while we went by water, or ſixty two or more porters in caſe the foreſt obliged us to go by land, and each city to give us about half a piſtole, the ſame being allowed to the chief Mandarines, who are reputed to have their charges borne by the emperor, tho' this will not amount to the tenth part of their expence. Beſides, he ordered a Mandarine to accompany us, and ſee all due reſpect paid us. We would gladly have avoided it, but were forced to go thro' what we undeſignedly had engaged in.

The barge we were on board was a ſecond rate, containing in breadth ſixteen feet, and in length ſeventy, and proportionable in height. Beſides the cook-room, the maſter and his family's apartment (for they have no other dwelling) that of his crew, and another for our men, there was a pretty large parlour where he dined, and three rooms in which ſix perſons might eaſily lie, all which were varniſhed, gilt, and painted. The way of our travelling was this: As ſoon as anchor was weighed, the trumpets and hautboys ſounded a march, then they took their leave with a kind of cheſt wherein were three iron barrels, which made a greater report than ſo many muſkets; they were diſcharged one after another, and between each the muſick ſounded, and ſo continued playing for ſome time. Whenever we met a Mandarine's barge, or ſome town in our way, this was repeated; as alſo when night or a contrary wind obliged us to come to an anchor. This to a Mandarine had not only been a great honour, but a very entertaining conſort: as for us, we thought it a very inharmonious one, whoſe tediousneſs made us pay dear for our honour.

We had beſides a watch every night to guard us, the manner of which was this: About eight at night, ten or twelve inhabitants of the town, neareſt to the place we anchored in, appeared in a row on the ſhore; then the maſter came upon the deck, and thence made them a fair ſpeech, concerning the obligations they lay under of preſerving all that belonged to the emperor, and watching for the Mandarines ſafety, who themſelves did ſo for that of the ſtate. Then he deſcended into particulars of all the accidents they were liable to, fire, thieves, and ſtorms, exhorting them to be vigilant, and telling them they were reſponſible for all the miſchief which might happen. They anſwered each paragraph with a ſhout, and then retired to their watch-houſe; only one centry was left there, who continually ſtruck two ſticks one againſt another, and was hourly relieved by others, who made the ſame noiſe, that we might know they did not fall aſleep, which we would gladly have permitted them to do, on condition we might have done ſo ourſelves. But this is the cuſtom when any Mandarine travels by water.

How uneaſy ſoever all theſe ceremonies might be, I muſt confeſs that I never met with any way of travelling leſs tireſome than this; for after thirteen days voyage we arrived at Yamcheu, on January the third, as freſh as if we had not ſtirred out of our houſe. There we found father Aleoniſa, a Franciſcan, ſubvicar to the biſhop of Baſilea, and father Galiani, a jeſuit, who were come thus far to meet us; the one from the biſhop to proffer us that prelate's aſſiſtance, and the other by his credit and experience, to make the reſt of our journey as eaſy as he could. Both knew we had letters of commendation from the king, and were willing to ſhew us all the reſpect due to thoſe who are under his majeſty's protection. This was not the only civility we received from them, for they have ſince obliged us ſo highly, that we never can enough expreſs our gratitude.

Here the froſt forced us to leave the great canal, and we had horſes found us for our men, and porters for our goods. As for ourſelves, the great cold and ſnow, which we were unaccuſtomed to, made us chooſe to go in litters, ſome of our horſemen riding about us that we might be the more ſecure. We ſhifted our porters at each city or big town; and, which is very ſtrange, we could get above a hundred, with as much ſpeed and eaſe, as in France we might five or ſix. The cold increaſed hourly, and became at laſt ſo violent, that we found the river Hoamho, one of the greateſt in China, almoſt frozen over; a whole day was ſpent in breaking the ice, and we paſſed with no ſmall trouble and danger. We left Nimpo on the 27th of November, 1687, and arrived at Pekin the 8th of February following; but we reſted ſo often by the way, that indeed we had not ſpent above a month and an half in our journey.

Theſe honours paid us by ſo potent a prince, and the good ſucceſs of ſo long and perillous a voyage, together with a proſpect of the benefit our religion might reap by it, would have occaſioned in us a well-grounded joy, had not our thoughts been cruelly diverted from it. Scarce were we in ſight of Pekin, but we received the moſt afflicting news of father Verbieſt's death. It ſtruck us with an aſtoniſhment which leſſened but to make our grief more ſenſible. He it was who had procured our admittance into China; who beſides, in delivering us from the viceroy of Hamcheu, had ſaved our lives, and, which we looked on as a greater kindneſs, was ready to aſſiſt us with his credit, in the deſigns we had to promote God's glory and the intereſt of our holy faith.

We were not the only loſers by his death, for I dare ſay, every body miſſed him; to his care, zeal and prudence, was owing the reſtauration of the Chriſtian religion, which had been almoſt ruined by the late perſecutions: he encouraged the old chriſtians conſtancy, and ſupported the weakneſs of the new, by taking them under his eſpecial protection; his recommendation gained our miſſionaries reſpect; he had ſaved Macao, of which the Tartars had entertained ſome jealouſies; and the ſtate itſelf, to which he had rendered conſiderable ſervices, was not a little beholding to him; ſo that the Europeans, the Chineſe, and the emperor himſelf did equally look on him as their father. This great man, ſo much reſpected in the Eaſt, deſerved, my lord, that you ſhould take notice of him; and in purſuance to my deſign, which was in this letter to give you an account of our journey from Siam to the chief town of China, I could not end with a ſubject that might better challenge your attention. I am with all reſpect,

My Lord,
Your Honour's moſt humble,
and obedient Servant,
L. J.

LETTER II.

To her Highneſs the Dutcheſs of Nemours.

The Manner of our Reception by the Emperor, and what we obſerved at Pekin.

Madam,

NOne but a lady of a comprehenſive genius, and an unlimited zeal, could, as you do, concern herſelf in what paſſes at ſo great a diſtance. The curioſities of Europe were too few for your vaſt mind, which would be a ſtranger to nothing that might inform or edify it, and I may without flattery ſay, that the Eaſt has no ſecrets you have not pried into, nor any rarities you are unacquainted with.

I have myſelf learned from your highneſs ſeveral things unknown to moſt travellers, and, having been as far as the world reaches, muſt confeſs that your knowledge has travelled farther yet than me.

What then, madam, can I tell you of China more than you already have diſcovered, unleſs it be ſome particulars of my voyage, which, being the lateſt any European has made thither, will at leaſt have the charms of novelty? It being my duty to give a great ſtateſman an account of it, I make bold to ſend your highneſs the letter I wrote to him ſome days ſince; and what I now add ſhall at once be a continuation of it, and a token of the reſpect I bear you, and the readineſs I ſhall ever be in, to obey your highneſs's commands.

On our arrival at Pekin, we found the court in mourning for the empreſs dowager: the courts of juſtice were ſhut up, and the emperor gave no audience. But the 27 days being ſpent, during which the laws oblige him to cloſe mourning, he ſent one of his officers to our houſe, to ſee how we did, and to ask us queſtions. The meſſage was very obliging, and, beſides a thouſand other civilities, we were told the emperor would be as kind to us as he had been to the fathers at his court, ſince we were all of the ſame ſociety.

The gentleman told us, his imperial majeſty would gladly know what the French court thought of his progreſs into Tartary, and the defeat of Ouſanguay (who was a Chineſe rebel that had given him no ſmall trouble.) He asked us in what perfection learning was in Europe, whether any new invention had lately been made, or any conſiderable diſcovery. Then he ſpoke much of the honours the emperor deſigned to pay to the memory of father Verbieſt, for whom his majeſty had a particular affection. That name, madam, cannot be unknown to you, and you are too much concerned in what relates to the Eaſtern church, to be ignorant of her loſs in that illuſtrious miſſionary's death.

We all replied that we gratefully acknowledged the emperor's bounty, but that among the ceremonies, with which the Chineſe uſed to expreſs their reſpect for their deceaſed friends, there were ſome which ſeemed to diſagree with the ſanctity of our religion. *How!* anſwered he, *Do you oppoſe the emperor's will?* To this a father returned, *My lord, our lives are the emperor's, he may take them away when he pleaſes, but nothing in the world is able to make us alter the leaſt tittle of our belief. My orders*, ſaid he, *are not to diſpute it with you, but to ask you for the petition, which, according to cuſtom, you are to preſent to him upon this occaſion. The emperor, by an unprecedented goodneſs, would gladly peruſe and correct it himſelf, if it ſhould need any amendment: but he commands you to keep this favour ſecret.*

All, that is preſented to the emperor, ought to be indited in terms ſo nicely conformable to the laws and cuſtoms of the country, in reſpect of his quality who ſpeaks, and of the buſineſs he treats of, that the penning of it is no little trouble, eſpecially for a ſtranger. An improper expreſſion, a word, nay a letter miſplaced, is ſufficient to undo a Mandarine, and ſeveral have loſt their places for being guilty of the like faults, either through inadvertency or ignorance. The emperor, well skill'd in all theſe formalities, queſtioned our capacity in that reſpect, and would truſt no body but himſelf; ſo that by an incredible goodneſs he took the pains to compoſe it, that it might ſtand the moſt critical examination.

Some days after, the ſame gentleman came with ſeveral new queries. He enquired particularly into the motives of the late Dutch war, and into the famous paſſage of the Rhine. *For in truth*, ſaid he, *what*

what has been told the emperor is not to be believed. Perhaps the river is neither ſo broad, ſo deep, nor ſo rapid as is reported; and perhaps the Dutch had ſome private reaſons not to oppoſe your king's conqueſts with more vigour.

Then, madam, did we wiſh for a more perfect knowledge of his language, that we might repreſent to him the great ſoul, the good fortune, and the unſhaken valour of Lewis the Great, to whoſe ſoldiers nothing is impoſſible while they fight in his view, and are animated by his example. The father, who was our interpreter, told him, however, as much as would perſuade him, that none but ſuch a hero could frame and carry on the like enterprizes: He was aſtoniſhed at our recital of them, and roſe immediately to go and report it to his prince.

As he was going out he turned to us, ſaying, *Gentlemen, all I have heard is indeed wonderful, but what my eyes behold ſeems no leſs ſurpriſing: Who could think that theſe fathers who have dwelt here ſo long, who are of a different nation, and never ſaw you before, ſhould look on you as their brethren; that you ſhould treat them like yours, and that you ſhould be as kind to each other, as if you had been acquainted all your lives. I really am extremely taken with this charity, and can no longer doubt the truth of what you profeſs.* So open a confeſſion might give us ſome hopes, that *He was not far from the kingdom of God*: It is true he believed, but alas, of what uſe is that belief, when we have not the courage to act accordingly, but to inhance our guilt?

If we had come thither Incognito, the Mandarines would have had nothing to ſay to us; but it being in purſuance of an order from the Lipou, which, as I have already hinted, is one of the moſt noted courts of juſtice in the empire, the viceroy of the province, we came from, remitted us into their hands, and we were, according to cuſtom, to be delivered up by them to their ſovereign. Wherefore as ſoon as the mourning ended, and they had leave to ſit, we were ſummoned before them, with orders to carry thither all our mathematical machines and inſtruments, of which they already had an inventory.

The emperor, who would not have us do any thing without his advice, was acquainted with it, and ſent us word it was not fitting we ſhould ſhew our inſtruments, and that we might, if we thought fit, decline making a perſonal appearance. We went thither however, being ſeveral times invited in a moſt obliging manner, and not judging it convenient by a blunt refuſal to offend ſo conſiderable a body, which beſides was our judge, and already but too great an enemy to our religion.

Some Mandarines, deputed by their preſident for that purpoſe, made us a very civil reception: They deſired us to ſit down, and preſented us with ſome tea before they had drunk any themſelves; a reſpect they do not pay even to ambaſſadors, as father Pereira, a Portugueſe, aſſured us, who had been preſent at an audience they had lately given to thoſe of Portugal.

This viſit was indeed but for form's ſake, to the end they might inform the emperor of our being ſafely arrived to town, according to his majeſty's commands. So that, after ſome compliments on each ſide, we were deſired to attend the next day at the palace, when they would diſcharge us.

We went thither accordingly at the appointed time, and having ſtaid during ſome hours in a large court, where the Mandarines uſually wait, who have any buſineſs there; their preſident or chief juſtice brought us the anſwer to an addreſs he had according to cuſtom preſented on our account. This anſwer was written on a ſmall varniſhed board, wrapped up in a piece of yellow taffety: The contents were, *That we might uſe our inſtruments, and ſettle in what part of the empire we pleaſed, according to the firſt orders from court, when we were ſent for thither. And that in the mean while, the* Lipou *would deliver us up to the other fathers, who were to introduce us into the emperor's preſence, when his majeſty ſhould think fit.*

Yet that prince's intentions were not that we ſhould leave Pekin, but on the contrary, he would have kept us all there, and lodged us in his palace. He had expreſſed himſelf ſo clearly on that point, that we had need of all the intereſt and dexterity of father Pereira, to divert the ſtorm. That father, who was then ſuperior of all the miſſionaries, moved with compaſſion that ſo many vineyards were ruined for want of huſbandmen, judged we might be more uſeful in the country. He knew beſides what an averſion we had to a courtier's life, which he might eaſily learn from our continual complaints againſt it.

Theſe and ſeveral other reaſons induced him to intreat the emperor that he would not oppoſe it, and his zeal inſpired him with ſuch effectual methods, that the good prince at laſt conſented: *But*, ſaid he, *it ſhall be on condition we divide the ſpoil; I'll take two at your choice, and you ſhall diſpoſe of the other three; what can you ſay againſt this, I quit you the better half?*

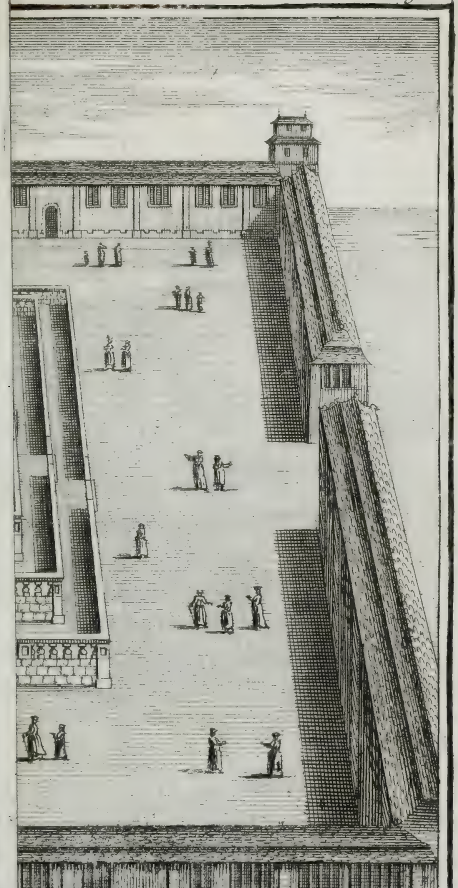
We had not yet had the honour to attend his imperial majeſty, for the formalities I laſt mentioned were to precede our audience: But the Lipou had ſcarce delivered up their charge, when two eunuchs came to the college, to warn the ſuperior, that he ſhould attend with his brethren in a court of the palace which was appointed. We were inſtructed in the ceremonies uſual on ſuch occaſions, which was done with little trouble, being already half licked into a Chineſe form.

Firſt then, we were carried in chairs to the firſt gate, whence we went on foot through eight courts of a prodigious length, built round with lodgings of different architecture, but all very ordinary, except thoſe large ſquare buildings over the arches through which we paſſed from one court to another. Thoſe indeed were ſtately, being of an extraordinary thickneſs, and proportionable in breadth and heighth, and built with fair white marble, but which was worn rough thro' age. Thro' one of theſe courts ran a ſmall rivulet, over which were laid ſeveral little bridges of the ſame marble, but of a whiter colour and better workmanſhip.

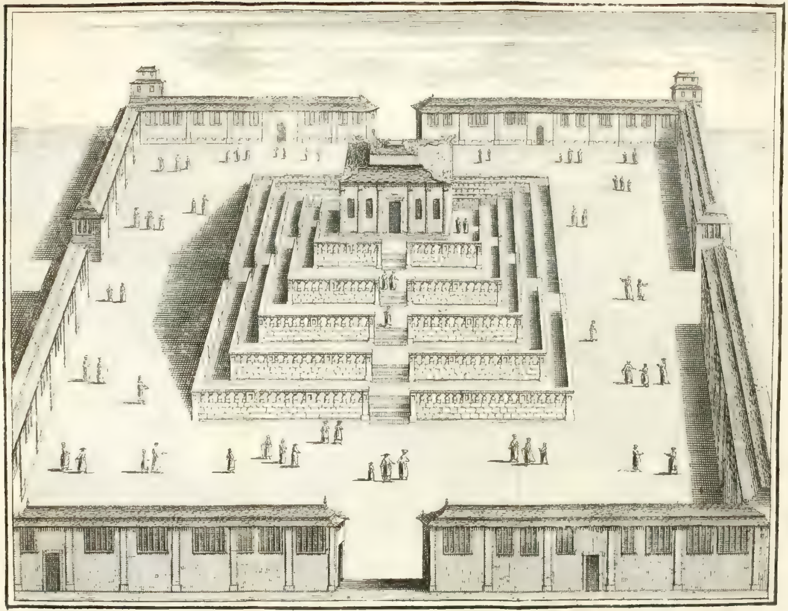
It were hard, madam, to deſcend into particulars, and give you a pleaſing deſcription of that palace, becauſe its beauty does not conſiſt ſo much in being compoſed of ſeveral curious pieces of architecture, as in a prodigious quantity of buildings; and an infinite number of adjoining courts and gardens which are all regularly diſpoſed, and in the whole make a palace really great, and worthy of the monarch who inhabits it.

The only thing which ſurpriſed me, and ſeemed ſingular in its kind, is the emperor's throne. The beſt deſcription of it, which my memory will afford me, is this: In the midſt of one of thoſe great courts ſtands a ſquare baſis or ſolid building, of an extraordinary bigneſs, whoſe top is adorned with a baluſtrade, much after our faſhion; this ſupports another like unto it, but framed taper-wiſe, over which are placed three more, ſtill loſing in bulk as they gain in heighth. Upon the uppermoſt is built a large hall, whoſe roof, being covered with gilt tiles, is borne by the four walls, and as many rows of varniſhed pillars, between which is ſeated the throne.

Theſe vaſt baſes, with their baluſtrades made of white marble, and thus diſpoſed amphitheater-wiſe, when



e of the Greatest Court of his Pallace



The Throne of the Emperour of China, Scituated in the Middle of the Greatest Court of his Pallace, and raised upon five bases of White Marble.

when the ſun ſhines, dazzle the eyes of the beholder, with the luſtre and ſplendor of the gold and varniſh, and afford a moſt beautiful proſpect, eſpecially ſince they are placed in the midſt of a ſpacious court, and ſurrounded by four ſtately rows of building: ſo that were its beauty inhanced by the ornaments of our modern architecture, and by that noble ſimplicity which is ſo much valued in our buildings, it would doubtleſs be as magnificent a throne as ever was raiſed by art.

After a quarter of an hour's walk, we at length came to the emperor's apartment. The entrance was not very ſplendid, but the anti-chamber was adorned with ſculptures, gildings, and marble, whoſe neatneſs and workmanſhip were more valuable than the richneſs of the ſtuff. As for the preſence-chamber, the ſecond mourning not being over, it was ſtill diſrobed of all its ornaments, and could boaſt of none but the ſovereign's perſon, who ſat after the Tartar's cuſtom, on a table or Sopha, raiſed three feet from the ground, and covered with a plain white carpet, which took up the whole breadth of the room. There lay by him ſome books, ink, and pencils; he was cloathed with a black ſattin veſt, furred with ſable; and a row of young eunuchs plainly habited, and unarmed, ſtood on each hand cloſe legged, and with their arms extended downwards along their ſides; which is looked upon there as the moſt reſpectful poſture.

In that ſtate, the moſt modeſt that even a private man could have appeared in, did he chuſe to be ſeen by us, deſiring we ſhould obſerve his dutifulneſs to the empreſs his departed mother, and the grief he conceived at her death, rather than the ſtate and grandeur he is uſually attended with.

Being come to the door, we haſtened with no little ſpeed (for ſuch is the cuſtom) till we came to the end of the chamber oppoſite to the emperor. Then all abreaſt we ſtood ſome time, in the ſame poſture the eunuchs were in.

Next we fell on our knees, and having joined our hands, and lifted them up to our heads, ſo that our arms and elbows were at the ſame height, we bowed thrice to the ground, and then ſtood again as before: The ſame proſtration was repeated a ſecond time, and again a third, when we were ordered to come forward, and kneel before his majeſty.

The gracious prince, whoſe condeſcention I cannot enough admire, having enquired of us of the grandeur and preſent ſtate of France, the length and dangers of our voyage, and the manner of our treatment by the Mandarines: *Well*, ſaid he, *ſee if I can add any new favour to thoſe I have already conferred upon you. Is there any thing you would deſire of me? you may freely ask it.* We returned him humble thanks, and begged he would permit us, as a token of our ſincere gratitude, to lift up each day of our lives our hands to heaven, to procure to his royal perſon, and to his empire, the bleſſing of the true God, who alone can make princes really happy.

He ſeemed well ſatisfied with our anſwer, and permitted us to withdraw, which is performed, without any ceremony. The great reſpect and dread, which the preſence of the moſt potent monarch in Aſia inſpired us with, did not yet awe us ſo far, but that we took a full view of his perſon. Indeed, leſt our too great freedom herein ſhould prove a crime (for in what concerns the emperor of China, the leaſt miſtake is ſuch) we had firſt obtained his leave.

He was ſomething above the middle ſtature, more corpulent that what in Europe we reckon handſome; yet ſomewhat more ſlender than a Chineſe would wiſh to be: full viſaged, disfigured with the ſmall pox, had a broad forehead, little eyes, and a ſmall noſe after the Chineſe faſhion ; his mouth was well made, and the lower part of his face very agreeable. In fine, tho' he bears no great majeſty in his looks yet they ſhew abundance of good nature, yet his ways and actions have ſomething of the prince in them, and ſhew him to be ſuch.

From his apartment we went into another, where a Mandarine treated us with tea, and preſented us, as from the emperor, with about a hundred piſtoles. The gift ſeemed but mean, conſidering whom it came from, but was very conſiderable in reſpect to the cuſtom of China, where it is the maxim of all great perſons to take as much, and give as little as they can. On the other hand he loaded us with honours, and ordered one of his officers to wait on us to our houſe.

I confeſs, madam, that a man muſt be wholly inſenſible to all the concerns of this world, not to be moved with a ſecret complacency, at the having ſuch reſpect paid him by one of the mightieſt princes in the world. But one muſt not judge of us on that account, by what is uſual with the men of this world, on the like occaſions.

The trueſt cauſe of the pleaſure, we receive from the favour of princes, is ſelf-intereſt. It is well known, that their careſſes are ever beneficial ; and a courtier would never be ſo overjoyful at a kind look or expreſſion from his king, if he did not expect ſome more ſolid bounties would follow : But as for us, whom our vows and miſſions forbid to have ſuch hopes, we look unconcernedly on all this world ; ſo that that part of it can never move or concern us.

It is true, God is ſometimes well pleaſed to ſee religion reſpected in the perſons of his miniſters : He often uſes thoſe methods to ſtrengthen the faith of of new converts, who need ſuch natural ſupports to fortify them againſt trials and temptations ; nay, it breeds even in the Gentiles a diſpoſition to embrace chriſtianity. Theſe thoughts made us take more delight in thoſe tokens of the emperor's favour; or, to ſpeak more properly, made us find them leſs diſagreeable.

Your highneſs is, perhaps, aſtoniſhed to ſee the ſovereign of an idolatrous nation ſo openly countenance our religion, and would gladly know what motives had induced him to it. His kindneſs for ſuch ſtrangers as we proceeds, doubtleſs, from the great eſteem he has long ſince had for the miſſionaries at Pekin. Beſides the commendation of their learning, he has always found them ſincere, honeſt, very zealous and affectionate to him, ever ready to obey his will, where their faith did not forbid them, harmleſs to a degree, he never could give over admiring, and ever deſirous to proclaim the true God.

He is above all ſo well perſuaded, that this is the ſole end of all their enterprizes, that he takes a ſecret delight in contributing to the propagation of the faith, thinking he can no other way better recompenſe theſe fathers earneſtneſs in his ſervice.

And ſo father Verbieſt, on his death-bed, wrote a letter to him, in part of which he thus expreſſed himſelf: *Dread Sir, I die contented, in that I have ſpent almoſt all my life in your majeſty's ſervice; but I beg your majeſty will be pleaſed to remember when I am dead, that my* only aim, *in what I did, was, to gain, in the greateſt monarch of the Eaſt, a protector to the moſt holy religion of the world.*

Perhaps, madam, you may have ſeen certain libels (for I know not what to call them elſe) which repreſent our ſociety as a ſort of men poſſeſſed with avarice and ambition, who undertake theſe long and painful travels, only to enrich themſelves by a ſacrilegious and ſcandalous traffick. Your highneſs may expect that calumny (the inſeparable companion of a ſpirit of ſedition and hereſy) not ſatiſied with perſecuting our religion in Europe, ſhould come even to the utmoſt parts of the world, to ſlander thoſe who endeavour to ſettle it there, as pure as we received it from our forefathers ; and you will not be ſorry to hear, how that very idolatry, which we deſtroy, cannot forbear witneſſing our good intentions, and that, if China ſaw what pictures are drawn here of her miſſionaries, ſhe would hardly know them. But it is not before your highneſs they need an advocate.

Among the ſeveral things which happened then at Pekin, nothing was more ſorrowful and at once more honourable to us, than the funeral of father Verbieſt, which his imperial majeſty had ordered to be put off till the laſt devoirs had been paid the empreſs dowager. Father Thomas, a jeſuit, has deſcribed this ceremony at large. I dare hope an extract of what he has wrote will not be unwelcome to you, both becauſe it will give you ſome inſight into their cuſtoms on the like occaſions, and that you will thereby grow better acquainted with a man whom his merit has made known to all the world. Be pleaſed then to accept of it as follows.

It ſeemed good to divine wiſdom, to take to himſelf from this mortal life father Ferdinando Verbieſt, a Fleming, and to beſtow on him the recompence of ſaints. Our miſſionaries affliction cannot eaſily be expreſſed, but much harder would it be to reckon by how many exemplary virtues, and conſiderable ſervices, he has merited their eſteem and gratitude.

Beſides ſeveral other good qualities, the greatneſs of his ſoul is particularly to be admired, which has never failed him in the moſt cruel perſecutions, ſo that he was ever triumphant over the enemies of the faith. The ſurvey of the mathematicks was at firſt proffered him, which dignity he accepted of, in hopes it would enable him to ſet on foot our miſſions, which were then wholly laid aſide.

He obtained a toleration for evangelical paſtors, who, after a long baniſhment, had their churches reſtored them. He ſtifled ſome perſecutions in their birth, and others he prevented, which threatened the tender flocks. The Mandarines no ſooner knew him, but they had a reſpect for him; and the emperor entertained ſo good an opinion of his capacity, that he kept him above a quarter of a year near his perſon, and during that time ſpent three or four hours every day with him in private, diſcourſing of ſeveral ſciences, eſpecially mathematicks.

In theſe converſations our zealous miſſionary endeavoured to bring him into a liking of our religion: he would explain to him its moſt ſtupendious myſteries, and made him obſerve it's holineſs, its truth and neceſſity; inſomuch, that the emperor, ſtruck with his powerful arguments, often owned, *that he believed a God:* his majeſty aſſured him of it, by a writing under his own hand, wherein he ſaid, among other things, *That all the religions of his empire ſeemed to him vain and ſuperſtitious, that the idols were nothing, and that he foreſaw chriſtianity would one day be built on their ruins.* A Chineſe doctor having in one of his books taken the liberty to place the chriſtian religion among the ſeveral hereſies China was infected with; the emperor, upon the father's complaint, ſtruck out thoſe lines himſelf, telling him the whole empire ſhould know what he had done.

Father *Verbieſt*'s intereſt was ſuch, that at his inſtigation the old inſtruments which ſtood on the platform of the obſervatory were pulled down, to make room for new ones of his contriving. He gave directions for the caſting of braſs guns, which ſaved the ſtates from ruin. He applied himſelf to ſeveral other works, to ſerve the publick, or ſatisfy the emperor's curioſity; and one may ſay, that on this laſt account he has ſearched into the moſt rare and ingenious inventions, that arts and ſciences have ever offered us.

The whole court looked upon him as the wiſeſt man of his age, but above all was charmed with his modeſty. It it true, no man ever was more mild and tractable than he; humbling himſelf before every one, while every one ſtrove to exalt him: inſenſible to all the things in this world, except where religion was concerned; for then he was no more the ſame man, and, as tho' he had been animated by a new ſpirit, his looks, his words, his actions, all were great, and becoming a chriſtian hero. The very emperor dreaded him at ſuch times, and was not eaſily perſuaded to admit him into his preſence: *He will fly out*, would he ſay, *into ſome indecency, which I muſt be forced, tho' unwillingly, to reſent.*

This holy boldneſs proceeded from a lively faith, and a great confidence in God. He deſpaired of nothing, tho' humanly impoſſible; and would often ſay, *We muſt never forget two of the chief maxims of chriſtian morality: Firſt, that, let our projects be never ſo well laid, they will certainly fall, if God leaves us to our own wiſdom. Secondly, That it were in vain the whole univerſe ſhould arm itſelf to deſtroy the work of God; nothing is powerful againſt the Almighty, and every thing proſpers that Heaven approves of.* So he never entered on any enterprize without imploring its help, tho' however he left no means untried that reaſon and chriſtian prudence offered him.

Thus did his zeal each day increaſe in ſtrength and purity: the eſtabliſhment of our faith wholly employed his thoughts, and whatever occupation elſe, he was put upon, proved a torment to him. He avoided all idle viſits and converſations, and could not endure to ſee people ſtudy only for curioſities ſake: he never ſo much as read the news that came from Europe, which at ſuch a diſtance we are uſually ſo greedy of; only he would hear the chief heads, provided you would ſpeak them in a few words. He would ſpend whole days and nights in writing letters of conſolation, inſtruction or recommendation for the miſſionaries; in compoſing divers works for the emperor or chief lords at his court; and in compiling the kalendar, calculating, with an indefatigable induſtry, the motion of the ſtars for every year.

This, and *the care of all the churches*, ſo impaired his ſtrength, that, in ſpite of the ſtrength of his conſtitution, he fell at laſt into a kind of conſumption, which yet did not hinder his framing great deſigns for the advancement of his religion. He had taken ſuch exact meaſures for the ſettling of it in the moſt remote parts of China, in the eaſtern Tartary, and even in the kingdom of Kovia; that nothing but his death could have prevented the execution of ſo well contriv'd a project.

Nor is his character, as a private perſon, leſs illuſtrious. For at his firſt admittance into our order he was a true monk, ſtrict in the performance of its rules, very obſervant to his ſuperiors, and loving ſtudy and retirement above all things; which he perſiſted in, even among the multitude of buſineſs, in the midſt of which he would be as ſedate as a hermit in his cell.

His conſcience was nice to extremity, ſo that no man could take more care than he did to be always ready to make his appearance before him who can eſpy faults even in ſaints and angels. To preſerve his innocence, he never went out without a ſevere cilice or an iron chain, and uſed to ſay, it was a ſhame for a jeſuit to be clothed in ſilks, and in the livery of the world, and not to wear the livery of Chriſt.

His ſoul was naturally great, and, when others neceſſities wanted a ſupply, his charity was boundleſs. But he was hard-hearted to himſelf, courting poverty even in plenty, to that degree, that the emperor, who took great notice of him, often ſent him ſtuff with expreſs orders to wear it, and be more ſumptuous in his apparel. His bed, table, and furniture were indeed too mean for a Mandarine; but he ever preferred his ſtation in the church before that in the ſtate. He has often proteſted, he would never have accepted of that office, had he not hoped, by ſeeming to the Gentiles the head of the chriſtians, to have thereby borne all their envy, and been the moſt expoſed to their malice, and the firſt ſacrificed in caſe of perſecution.

This hope made him be ſatisfied with his condition, and his writings expreſſed ſuch an ardent deſire of dying for Jeſus Chriſt, that nothing but martyrdom was wanting to his being a martyr; yet he might in ſome meaſure be reckon'd ſuch, ſince he begged it of God with that groaning of ſpirit, which is a continual ſuffering to thoſe that cannot obtain it: *Reckon me, O Lord,* did he often cry out, *among thoſe who have deſired, but never could ſhed their blood for thee. I have, indeed, neither their innocency, their virtue, nor their courage, but thou may'ſt apply their merits to me, and (which will make me much more agreeable in thy ſight) thou canſt cloath me with thine own. Under that veil of thine infinite mercy, I dare offer my life as a ſacrifice to thee. I have been ſo happy as to confeſs thy holy name among the people, at court, before the tribunals under the weight of irons, and in the darkneſs of priſons, but what will this confeſſion avail me, unleſs ſigned with my blood?*

Full of theſe exalted thoughts, and already ripe for heaven, by the practice of every chriſtian virtue, he was ſeiz'd with a ſickneſs of which he died. It began with a faintneſs and an univerſal decay of nature, which grew into a conſumption. The emperor's phyſicians kept him up ſome time with the help of phyſick, eſpecially cordials, in which the Chineſe have a wonderful ſucceſs; but, his fever increaſing, art at length was forced to yield to nature. He received the ſacraments with a zeal that inflamed all that were preſent; and, when he yielded up the ghoſt, they were equally ſtruck with devotion and ſorrow.

The emperor, who, the day before had loſt the empreſs his mother, felt a double grief when he heard the news. He ordered the burial to be put off till the court went out of deep mourning; and then he ſent two lords of the higheſt quality to pay him on his behalf the ſame devoirs which private men uſually pay to their dead. They kneeled before the coffin, which was expoſed in a hall, bowed ſeveral times, remaining a long while with their faces to the ground, and wept and groaned heavily, for that is the cuſtom. Then after thoſe, and ſeveral other expreſſions of their ſorrow, they read aloud his encomium, which the emperor himſelf had compoſed, and which was to be ſet up near the corpſe. It runs thus:

We ſeriouſly conſider within ourſelves, that father Ferdinando Verbieſt has, of his own good will, left Europe to come into our dominions, and has ſpent the greateſt part of his life in our ſervice; we muſt ſay this for him, That during all the time that he took care of the mathematicks, his predictions never failed, but always agreed with the motions of the heavens. Beſides, far from neglecting our orders, he has ever approved himſelf exact, diligent, faithful, unalterable, *and conſtant in his labour, till he had finiſhed his work. As ſoon as we heard of his ſickneſs, we ſent him our phyſician, and when we knew that a dead ſleep had taken him away from us, our heart was wounded with a lively grief. We gave two hundred golden crowns, and ſome pieces of ſilk, as a contribution to the charges of his funeral: and it is our pleaſure, that this declaration bear witneſs of the ſincere affection we bore him.*

The prime Mandarines and ſeveral lords at court followed their ſovereign's example. Some wrote ſpeeches in his praiſe on large pieces of ſattin, which were hung up in the hall where the body lay in ſtate; others ſent in preſents, and all mourned for his loſs. At length the day for his funeral being agreed upon, which was the 11th of *March* 1688, every body was willing to contribute ſomething towards the ceremony.

The emperor in the morning ſent his father-in-law, who is alſo his uncle, with one of the chief lords of his court, attended by a gentleman of the bed-chamber, and five officers of his houſhold, to repreſent his perſon; who all began by falling down before the corpſe, and wept a pretty while; during which, all things were diſpoſed for the proceſſion.

The college is ſituated near the ſouth gate, whence you go to the north gate, by a ſtreet built in a ſtrait line, about a hundred foot broad, and a league long, which toward the middle is croſſed by another exactly like it, one end of which leads to the weſtern gate, being within ſix hundred paces of our burying-place, which the emperor Vanli formerly beſtowed on father Ricci, but was taken away during the late perſecution, and not reſtored till now by a ſpecial favour from the preſent emperor. Thro' theſe two ſtreets the funeral paſſed, in the following order.

Firſt, came a trophy thirty foot high, varniſhed over with red, on which were written, in large golden characters, the name and titles of father Verbieſt. This was, as it were, the fore-runner of the enſuing pomp, which began with a great croſs hung with flags, and carried between two rows of chriſtians, all cloathed in white, holding in one hand a lighted taper, and in the other a handkerchief to wipe off their tears. The Gentiles are uſed on ſuch ſolemnities to ſhed feigned tears; but the chriſtians loſs made them ſhed real ones. Next, ſome diſtance off, followed in the ſame order the picture of the Virgin Mary in a frame, round which were pieces of ſilk neatly plated in ſeveral manners, inſtead of carving; and then St. Michael's repreſentation was borne with the like ceremonies. And I may ſay, that the chriſtians who walked on either ſide, devoutly praying, inſpired even the heathen with a veneration for thoſe precious tokens of our faith.

Immediately after came the father's encomium, of the emperor's own compoſing, written on a large piece of yellow ſattin; a crowd of chriſtians ſurrounded it, and two rows of thoſe, who had been invited, followed it in a reſpectful manner. At length appeared the corpſe, in a coffin made of ordinary wood, but varniſhed and gilt after the manner of the country, carried by ſixty bearers, and attended by the miſſionaries, the deputies from court, and a throng of lords and Mandarines, who cloſed up the proceſſion. It took up above a thouſand paces, the ſtreets all the way were lined by an infinite number of ſpectators, who with amazement beheld our chriſtian rites triumphing, even in their capital city, over pagan ſuperſtition.

When we were come to the burying-place, the miſſionaries in their ſurplices read the prayers of the church before the Mandarines. The body was beſprinkled

ſprinkled with holy water, and perfumed with incenſe in the uſual manner; then it was let down into a very deep ſquare vault, encloſed with four good brick walls. It was like a chamber under ground, and in the ſcripture phraſe became to him an everlaſting habitation. Having pray'd near it ſome time, we remain'd on our knees to hear what the emperor's father-in-law had to ſay to us; which was this: *Father Verbieſt has been conſiderably ſerviceable to the emperor and the ſtate; of which his imperial majeſty, being ſenſible, has ſent me with theſe lords to make a publick acknowledgment of it on his behalf, that all the world may know the ſingular affection his majeſty did ever bear him while he lived, and the great grief he has received by his death.*

We were ſo moved with the diſmal ceremony, the chriſtians continual lamentations, our own great loſs, and the emperor's ſurpriſing bounty, that we were not able to reply. Every one melted into tears; but that prince, who expected another anſwer from us, was obliged to preſs us for it, when at length, father *Pereiva* thus ſpoke on our behalf: *My lord, our anguiſh was not ſo much the cauſe of our ſilence, as the emperor's unparallel'd goodneſs; for what can we ſay or think, when we conſider that ſo great a monarch uſes us who are ſtrangers, unknown, uſeleſs, and perhaps troubleſome to him, as if we had the honour to be in his ſervice? Were we his children he could not love us more; he takes care of our health, of our reputation, of our life: he honours our very death not only with his elogies, his liberality, the preſence of the moſt noble lords of his court, but (which never can enough be prized) by his grief. What return, my lord, can we then make, not to ſay to all his favours, but to that alone which your highneſs has been pleaſed to deliver? We will only humbly beg your grace would acquaint his majeſty, that we weep that our* *tears may ſhew the greatneſs of our ſorrow, but that we remain ſilent, becauſe we can find no words ſufficient to expreſs our gratitude.*

The emperor was informed of what had paſſed, and ſome days after the * chief court of rites preſented a petition, that his majeſty would ſuffer them to decree ſome new honours to that illuſtrious father's memory. The emperor not only granted it, but willed them to conſider, that a ſtranger of ſo extraordinary a merit was not to be look'd upon as an ordinary man. In the very firſt meeting they ordered ſeven hundred golden crowns ſhould be laid out on a tomb for him, and the encomium, which the emperor had wrote, ſhould be ingraved on a marble ſtone, and that ſome Mandarines ſhould be once more deputed to pay him their laſt devoirs in behalf of the empire. Then they dignified him, that is, gave him a higher title than any he had enjoyed during his life.

While the emperor was paying him honour on earth, the holy father, no doubt, prayed for him in heaven: for it is very obſervable, that that prince never was more inquiſitive about religion, than at that time. He ſent one of his gentlemen every minute to the fathers, to enquire about the condition of ſouls in the other world, about heaven, hell, purgatory, the exiſtence of a God, his providence, and the means neceſſary to ſalvation: ſo that God ſeemed to move his heart after an extraordinary manner, and to affect it with that anxiety which uſually precedes our converſion. But that happy moment was not yet come. However, who knows but father *Verbieſt*'s prayers, and the care of ſeveral zealous miſſionaries who have ſucceeded him, may haſten the execution of thoſe deſigns which providence ſeems to have on that great prince? I am moſt reſpectfully, Madam,

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* Which anſwers to our college of heralds.

Your Highneſs's moſt humble,
moſt obedient ſervant,
L. J.

LETTER III.

To his Highneſs the Cardinal of FURSTEMBERG. *Of the Cities, Houſes, and Chief Buildings of* China.

My Lord,

AMONG the ſeveral empires into which the world has hitherto been divided, that of China has ever obtained ſo conſiderable a place, that a prince cannot be wholly ignorant of what concerns it, without neglecting a point of knowledge neceſſary for thoſe in his place and condition.

This, my lord, was, no doubt, the motive that induced your highneſs to inquire ſo particularly into the ſtate of that country, and to deſire an exact account of the number and bigneſs of its cities, the multitude of its inhabitants, the beauty of its publick buildings, and figure of its palaces.

By this it plainly appears, that the vaſt genius, you have for buſineſs, does in no wiſe leſſen the acuteneſs of your judgment in the ſublimeſt arts, and eſpecially in architecture, of which, the moſt excellent works raiſed by your directions at Modave, Saverne, Berni, St. Germans, and above all in the famous cathedral of Strasbourg, are ſo many inſtances.

It having been my buſineſs to run over all China, where in five years time I have travelled above two

thouſand

thouſand leagues, I can perhaps ſatisfy your highneſs with more eaſe than any one beſides. I ſhall therefore preſent you with a deſcription of what ſeemed to me moſt remarkable.

Pekin, that is the north-court, is the chief city of China, and the uſual ſeat of its emperors. It is ſo named to diſtinguiſh it from Nankim, the ſouth-court, another very conſiderable city, ſo called from the emperor's reſiding there in former ages, it being the fineſt, the moſt commodious and beſt ſituated of the whole empire; but the continual incurſions of the Tartars, a warlike and very troubleſome neighbour,obliged him to ſettle in the moſt northerly provinces, that he might be always ready to oppoſe them,with the numerous army he uſually keeps near his court.

Pekin was the place fixed upon, being ſituate in the 40th degree of northern latitude, in a very fertile plain, and not far from the long wall. Its neighbourhood to the ſea on the eaſt, and the great canal on the ſouth, afford it a communication with ſeveral fine provinces, from which it draws moſt of its ſubſiſtence.

This city, which is of an exact ſquare form, was formerly four long leagues round; but the Tartars, ſettling there, forced the Chineſe to live without the walls, where they in a very ſhort while built a new town, which, taking a greater compaſs in length than breadth, doth with the old one compoſe an irregular figure. Thus Pekin is made up of two cities; one is called the Tartars, becauſe they permit none elſe to inhabit it; and the other the Chineſe, as large, but much more inhabited than the other. Both together are ſix great leagues in circuit, allowing 3600 paces to each league. This I can aver to be true, it having been meaſured by the emperor's ſpecial command.

This, my lord, will ſeem ſtrange to thoſe who are acquainted with Europe only, and think Paris the largeſt, as it is doubtleſs the fineſt city in the world; yet the difference between them is great. Paris, according to the draught Mr. Blondell has made, by order from our magiſtrates, on the account of a deſign they have to ſurround it with new walls, contains in its greateſt length but 2500 paces, and † conſequently, tho' we ſhould ſuppoſe it ſquare, would be but 10000 paces round; ſo we ſhould find it half as big as the Tartars town alone, and but a quarter as large as all Pekin.

But then if one reflects that their houſes are generally but one ſtory high, and ours, one with another, are four, it will appear, that Pekin has not more lodgings than Paris, but rather leſs, becauſe its ſtreets are much wider; beſides the emperor's palace, which is of a vaſt extent, is not half inhabited, and there are magazines of rice for the ſuſtenance of above 200000 men; again there are large courts filled with little houſes, in which thoſe who ſtand for their doctor's degree are examined; which alone would make a very big city.

Yet we muſt not conclude from hence, that there are at Paris and Pekin the like number of inhabitants; for the Chineſe are very cloſe together in their dwellings, ſo that twenty or more of them will lie in as little room as ten with us; and it muſt needs be ſo, ſince the multitude of people in the ſtreets is ſo great, that one is frightened at it; it being ſuch that perſons of quality have always a horſeman going before them, to make way. Even the wideſt ſtreets are not free from confuſion; and at the ſight of ſo many horſes, mules, camels, waggons, chairs and rings of 100 or 200 perſons, who gather here

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† In the draught the length does not bear a reciprocal proportion to its circuit.

and there round the fortune-tellers, one would judge that ſome unuſual ſhow had drawn the whole country to Pekin.

Indeed, to outward appearance our moſt populous cities are wilderneſſes in reſpect of this, eſpecially if we conſider that there are more women than men; and yet in theſe great crouds, you ſhall rarely ſee a woman. This, I ſuppoſe, has made ſome people think both cities might contain ſix or ſeven millions of ſouls, which was a great miſtake. By the following reflections it will, perhaps, appear that one muſt not always gueſs at the number of inhabitants in a place by the crowds that are ſeen in it.

Firſt, from all the neighbouring towns a multitude of peaſants daily flock to Pekin, with ſeveral uſeful and neceſſary commodities; now no river coming up to the city, theſe muſt be brought by land, which increaſes the number of carters, waggons, camels, and other beaſts of burthen. So that morning and night, at the opening or ſhutting of the gates, there are ſuch throngs of people going in or out, that you muſt wait a long while before you can get by; wherefore you muſt not eſteem all you meet citizens.

Secondly, moſt artificers in China work in their cuſtomers houſes; as for example, if I want a ſuit, my taylor comes in the morning to my lodging, where he works all day, and at night returns home; and ſo the reſt. Theſe are continually about, looking out for buſineſs; even the ſmiths carry with them their anvil, their furnace, and other implements for their ordinary uſe. This helps to increaſe the multitude.

Thirdly, all perſons, eſpecially thoſe of any note, never go abroad but on horſeback or in chairs, with a numerous train. If at Paris all officers, gentlemen, lawyers, phyſicians, and wealthy citizens were always thus attended, the ſtreets would not be ſo open.

In the fourth place, when a Mandarine goes any where, all his inferior officers follow him in all their formalities, ſo that they form a kind of proceſſion. The lords at court, and princes of the blood, never are without a great guard of horſe, and being neceſſitated to go almoſt every day to court, their very equipage is ſufficiently cumberſome to the city.

It is evident that theſe cuſtoms,which are peculiar to China, do very much increaſe the throng, and it muſt not be wondered at, that the city ſhould ſeem much more populous than it really is: and what muſt convince us is, that, as I have ſhewn, there is more room for inhabitants in Paris than in Pekin. Wherefore though it be granted that twenty or five and twenty perſons lodge there in as little compaſs as ten do at Pekin; yet Pekin will be found to contain near twice as many as Paris does, and I think I ſhall not be very wide of the truth, if I allow it two millions of inhabitants.

I have been ſomething prolix upon this point, becauſe I find it but ſlightly inquired into by moſt hiſtorians. Nothing is more deceitful than number at firſt ſight. We think upon a view of the ſky, that the ſtars are numberleſs, and, when told, are ſurpriſed to find they are ſo few. To ſee an army of a hundred thouſand men in the field, you would imagine all the world were there; and even thoſe, who are uſed to ſuch a ſight, are apt to miſtake if they are not aware.

It is good to examine every thing ourſelves, eſpecially in China, where they never reckon but by millions; and though in theſe caſes one cannot be ſo very exact, it is not impoſſible to come ſo near the truth as to ſatisfy any curious inquirer.

Almoſt all the ſtreets are built in a direct line, the greateſt being about a hundred and twenty foot broad, and a good league long, and the ſhops where they ſell ſilks and china-ware, which generally take up the whole ſtreet, make a very agreeable perſpective. The Chineſe have a cuſtom which adds to the beauty of their ſtreets. Each ſhop-keeper puts out before his houſe, on a little kind of pedeſtal, a board twenty or two and twenty foot high, painted, varniſhed, and often gilt, on which are written, in large characters, the names of the ſeveral commodities he ſells. Theſe kind of pilaſters, thus placed on each ſide of the ſtreet, and almoſt at an equal diſtance from each other, make a pretty odd ſhow. This is uſual in almoſt all the cities of China, and I have in ſome places ſeen ſo very neat ones, that one would think they had deſigned to make a ſtage of the ſtreet.

Two things however detract much from their beauty. The firſt, that the houſes are not proportionable, being neither well built nor high enough. The ſecond, that they are always peſtered with mud or duſt. That country, ſo well regulated in every thing elſe, is very deficient in this: both winter and ſummer are equally troubleſome to thoſe that walk abroad, and therefore are horſes and chairs ſo much in requeſt: for the dirt ſpoils the ſilken boots which they wear there; and the duſt ſticks to their cloaths, eſpecially if they are made of ſattin, which they have a way of oiling, to give it the more luſtre. There is ſo much duſt raiſed by the multitude or horſes, that the city is alwas covered with a cloud of it, which gets into the houſes, and makes its way into the cloſeſt cloſets, ſo that, take what care you will, your goods will ever be full of it. They ſtrive to allay it by a continual beſprinkling the ſtreets with water, but there is ſtill ſo much left, as is very offenſive, both as to cleanlineſs and health.

Of all the building this mighty city conſiſts in, the only remarkable one is the imperial palace, which

I have already deſcribed to your highneſs. I ſhall only add, to give you a more exact notion of it, that it not only includes the emperor's houſe and gardens, but alſo a little town inhabited by the officers at court, and a great number of artificers who are employed and kept by the emperor; for none but the eunuchs lie in the inner palace. The outward town is defended by a very good wall without, and divided from the emperor's houſe by one of leſs ſtrength. All the houſes are very low and ill contrived, far worſe than thoſe in the Tartars city; ſo that the quality of its inhabitants, and the conveniency of being near the court, are the only things that it is commendable for.

The inner palace is made up of nine vaſt courts, built in one line, in length, for I comprehend not thoſe on the wings, where are the kitchin, ſtables, and other offices. The arches thro' which you go from one to another are of marble, and over each there ſtands a large ſquare Gothick building; the roof looks odd, but yet handſome; for the ends of the joices are continued beyond the wall in manner of a cornice, which at a diſtance looks very neat. The ſides of each court are cloſed by leſſer apartments or galleries; but when you come to the emperor's lodgings, there, indeed, the portico's ſupported by ſtately pillars, the white marble-ſteps by which you aſcend to the inward halls, the gilt roofs, the carved-work, varniſh, gilding, and painting, they are adorned with, the floors made of marble or porcelain, but chiefly the great number of different pieces of architecture of which they conſiſt, dazzle the beholders eye, and truly look great, becoming the majeſty of ſo great a monarch. But ſtill, the imperfect notion, the Chineſe have of all kinds of arts, is betrayed by the unpardonable faults they are guilty of. The apartments are ill contrived, the ornaments irregular, there wants that uniformity in which conſiſts the beauty and conveniency of our palaces. In a word, there is as it were, deformity in the whole, which renders it very unpleaſing to foreigners, and muſt needs offend any one that has the leaſt notion of true architecture.

Some relations, however, cry it up as arts maſter-piece: the reaſon is, becauſe the miſſionaries, who wrote them, had never ſeen any thing beyond it, or elſe long uſe has accuſtomed them to it; for it is obſervable, that, let us diſlike a thing never ſo, time will at length make it ſupportable. Our fancy habituates itſelf to any ſight, and therefore an European, that has ſpent twenty or thirty years in China, can ſeldom give ſo good a judgment of it, as he that juſt comes in and views it. As the true accent of a language is often loſt among thoſe who pronounce it ill, ſo the ſharpneſs of a man's judgment is blunted by converſing with thoſe who have none.

The guards placed in the gates and avenues of the palace have no other arms but their ſcymiters, and are not ſo numerous as I at firſt imagined; but there is a multitude of lords and Mandarines, conſtantly attending at the uſual time of audience. Formerly the whole palace was inhabited by eunuchs, whoſe power and inſolence was grown to ſuch a pitch, that they became an inſupportable grievance to the princes of the empire; but the latter emperors of China, eſpecially thoſe deſcended from Tartary, have ſo humbled them, that they are at preſent very inconſiderable. The youngeſt ſerve as pages, the other are put to the vileſt employments, their taſk being to ſweep the rooms and keep them clean; they are ſeverely puniſhed by their overſeers, who never paſs by the leaſt fault.

The number of the emperor's wives or concubines is not eaſily known, it being very great and never fixed. They never were ſeen by any one but himſelf, and ſcarce durſt a man inquire about them. They are all maidens of quality, which the Mandarines or governors of the provinces chooſe, and as ſoon as they are entered the palace, they have no farther correſpondence with their friends, no not with their very fathers. This forced and perpetual ſolitude (for moſt of them are never taken notice of by the emperor) together with the intrigues they ſet on work to get into his favour, and the jealouſy they have of one another, which wracks them with ſuſpicions, envy, and hate, makes the moſt part of them very miſerable. Among thoſe who are ſo happy as to gain their prince's approbation, three are choſen which bear the title of queens. Theſe are in a far higher degree of honour than the reſt, having each their lodgings, their court, their ladies of honour, and other female attendants.

Nothing is wanting that can contribute to their diverſion. Their furniture, cloaths, attendance is all rich and magnificent: it is true, all their happineſs conſiſts in pleaſing their lord, for no buſineſs of any conſequence comes to their knowledge; and as they do not aſſiſt the ſtate with their counſels, ſo they do not diſturb it with their ambition.

The Chineſe differ very much from us in that point; they ſay Heaven has endowed women with good nature, modeſty, and innocence, that they might look after their families, and take care of their children's education; but that men are born with ſtrength of body and mind, with wit and generoſity to govern and rule the world. They are aſtoniſhed when we tell them, that with us the ſcepter often falls into a princeſs's hands, and often ſay by way of jeſt, *That Europe is the lady's kingdom.*

Thus, my lord, I have given you a true but general account of the emperor of China's palace, ſo much boaſted of by hiſtorians, becauſe perhaps in all Pekin they meet not with any worth their notice: for indeed all beſides are ſo mean, that it would be an abuſe to our language to give the title of palace to their noblemens houſes. They are but one ſtory high, as are all the reſt; tho', I confeſs, the great number of lodgings,for themſelves and their ſervants, does make ſome amends for their want of beauty and magnificence. Not but that the Chineſe are, as much as any nation, in love with looking great and ſpending high, but the cuſtom of the country, and the danger of being taken notice of, is a curb to their inclinations.

While I was at Pekin, one of the chief Mandarines (I think he was a prince) had built him a houſe ſomething more lofty and ſtately than the reſt; this was imputed to him as a crime, and thoſe, whoſe province it was, accuſed him before the emperor, inſomuch that the Mandarine, fearful of the event, pulled down his houſe while the buſineſs was under examination, before ſentence was given. This was eſteemed good policy in the eſtabliſhment of the firſt monarchies; and could the Romans but have ever obſerved it, they would have been perhaps ſtill as powerful in Europe, as the Chineſe are in Aſia.

Their courts of juſtice are built no better than common houſes. The courts indeed are large, the gates lofty, and ſometimes imbelliſhed with ornaments of architecture ſomething tolerable; but the inward rooms and offices can boaſt neither ſtate nor cleanlineſs.

Religion indeed has found better entertainment; you frequently meet with their idols temples, which the princes and people, equally ſuperſtitious, have raiſed at a vaſt expence, and beautified with great numbers of ſtatues. The roofs eſpecially are obſervable, for the ſplendor of their tiles, varniſhed with yellow and green, for the many curious figures which are placed on every ſide, and the dragons ſhooting out at the corners, painted in the ſame colours. The emperors have founded ſeveral within the outward bounds of the palace; among which, two more eminent than the reſt were built by the late monarch, at the requeſt of the queen his mother who was very much infatuated with the religion of the Lama's, a ſort of Tartarian prieſts, the moſt ſuperſtitious of all the Bonzes.

We were forbidden the entrance of theſe temples, being told it would prove of ill conſequence, and give great offence to our fellow chriſtians, ſo that curioſity gave place to our deſire of edifying them. But we had the liberty of ſeeing the famous celebrated imperial obſervatory. Be pleaſed, my lord, to read what one of our ableſt mathematicians has upon the report of travellers ſpoken of it: *Nothing in Europe is to be compared to it, whether for the magnificence of the place, or the bigneſs of thoſe vaſt brazen inſtruments, which, having been during theſe ſeven hundred years expoſed on the platforms of thoſe large towers, are ſtill as fair and intire as if they were but new molten. The diviſions of thoſe inſtruments are moſt exact, the diſpoſition moſt proper for their deſign, and the whole work performed with an inimitable neatneſs. In a word, it ſeemed that China inſulted her ſiſter nations, as if with all their learning and riches they could not come up to her in that point.*

Indeed, if China inſults us by the ſumptuouſneſs of her obſervatory, ſhe does well to do ſo 6000 leagues off, for were ſhe nearer, ſhe durſt not, for ſhame, make any compariſon.

Theſe relations had mightily prejudiced us in favour of the obſervatory; but when we viewed it, we found it as follows: We came firſt into a pretty large court, where the lodgings of thoſe who looked after the obſervatory were toward the right hand;

as you come in, you meet with a very narrow ſtaircaſe, by which you mount to the top of ſuch a ſquare tower, as we formerly uſed to fortify our city walls withal; it is indeed contiguous on the inſide to the wall of Pekin, and raiſed but ten or twelve feet above the bulwark. Upon this platform the Chineſe aſtronomers had placed their inſtruments, which tho' but few, yet took up the whole room: but father Verbieſt, when he undertook the ſurvey and management of the mathematicks, judged them very uſeleſs, and perſuaded the emperor to pull them down, and put up new ones of his own contriving. Theſe old inſtruments were ſtill in the hall near the tower, buried in duſt and oblivion. We ſaw them thro' a window cloſe ſet with iron bars. They appeared to us large, well caſt, and ſhaped ſomething like our aſtronomical rings. But they had laid in a by-court a celeſtial globe of about three foot diameter, that we had a full view of; its figure was almoſt oval; it was divided with little exactneſs, and the whole work very coarſe.

They have in a lower room near that place contrived a Gnomon. The paſſage, through which the ray enters, is about eight feet from the ground, horizontally placed, and made by two copper-plates which may be moved to and fro, to make the orifice larger or ſmaller. Under it lies a table covered with braſs, in the midſt of which, length-ways, they have ſtruck a meridian line 15 feet long, divided by other croſs lines, which are neither exact nor fine. They have cut little holes out into the ſides wherein they put water to keep it exactly horizontal; and this indeed, for a Chineſe contrivance, is the moſt tolerable of any I have ſeen, and might be ſerviceable to a careful aſtronomer; but I queſtion whether their ſkill who invented it is ſo great, as to uſe it rightly.

This

THE OBSERVATORY AT PEKIN.

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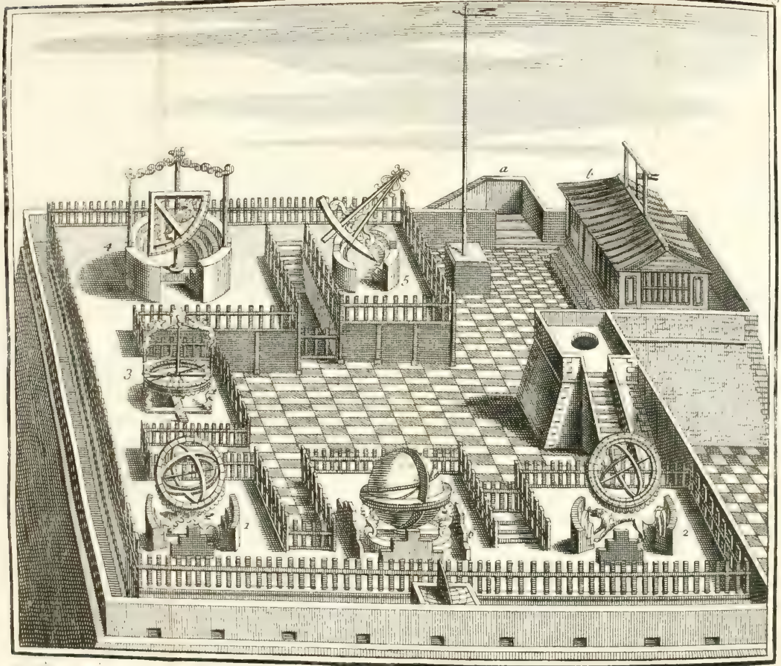


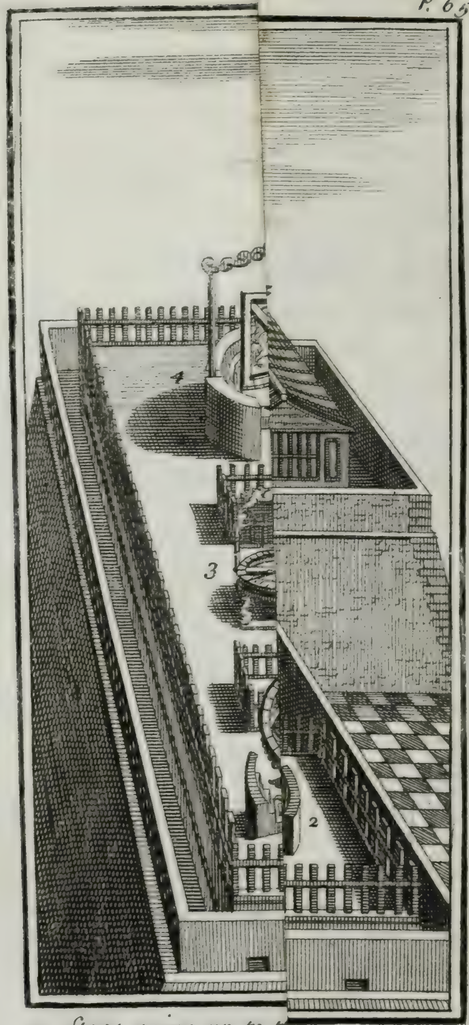
a. Steps going up to the Observatory
b. A Retiring Room for thoſe that make Observations.

1. a Zodical Sphere
2. an Equinoctial Sphere

3 an Azimuthall Horizon
4 a Quadrant

5. A Sextant
6 a Cœleſtiall Globe

P. 65



a. Steps going up to th
b. A Retiring Room for t
5 A Sextant
6 a Cœleſtiall Globe

This obſervatory, of little worth, as to its ancient machines, and leſs as to its ſituation and building, is now enriched with ſeveral brazen inſtruments which father Verbieſt has ſet up. They are large, well caſt, imbelliſhed with figures of dragons, and very well diſpoſed to the uſe they are deſigned for; and was but the niceneſs of their diviſions anſwerable to that of the work, and teleſcopes faſtened to them inſtead of pins, according to the new method uſed by the royal academy, nothing, that we have of that kind, might be brought in competition with them. But tho' the father was, no doubt, very careful of the diviſion of his circles, the Chineſe artificer was either very negligent, or very incapable of following his directions: ſo that I would rather truſt to a quadrant made by one of our good workmen at Paris, whoſe radius ſhould be but one foot and a half, than to that of ſix feet, which is at this tower.

Perhaps, your highneſs may be willing at one view to ſee how they are diſpoſed. This draught is very conformable to the original, and far from flattering it, as pictures and cuts generally do; I may ſay that it does not expreſs half its beauty. But each ſeveral piece ſhewing but confuſedly in this little ſpace, I have added, in as few words as I could, an explanation of the frame and embelliſhments of thoſe noble inſtruments.

I. SPHÆRA ARMILLARIS, ZODIACALIS, *of ſix feet in diameter.*

This is ſupported by four dragons heads, whoſe bodies after ſeveral windings are faſtened to the ends of two brazen beams laid a-croſs, that bear the whole weight of the ſphere. Theſe dragons which were uſed rather than any other creature, becauſe the emperor bears them in his coat of arms, are, as the Chineſe repreſent them, wrap'd up in clouds, with long hair on their heads between their horns, a fuzzy beard under their lower jaw, flaming eyes, long ſharp teeth, their mouth open, and breathing a whole ſtream of flame. Four lions of the ſame metal ſtand under the end of the aforeſaid beams, whoſe heads are raiſed higher or lower by ſkrews faſtened with them. The circles are divided both in their exterior and interior ſurface by croſs lines into 360 degrees each, and each degree into 60 minutes, and the latter into portions of 10 ſeconds each by ſmall pins.

II. SPHÆRA EQUINOXIALIS, *of ſix feet diameter.*

This ſphere is ſupported by a dragon, who bears it on his back bowed, and whoſe four claws ſeize the four ends of its pedeſtal, which as the former is formed of two brazen beams croſs-wiſe, whoſe ends are alſo borne by four ſmall lions, which ſerve to fix it right. The deſign is noble and well performed.

III. HORISON AZIMUTHALE, *ſix feet in diameter.*

This inſtrument, uſeful for the taking of azimuths, is compoſed of a large circle horiſontally placed. The double index, which ſerves it for a diameter, runs over all the limb, and carries round along with it a rectangle triangle, the upper angle of which is faſtened to a beam raiſed perpendicular from the center of the ſaid horiſon. Four folded dragons bow their heads under the inferior limb of the circle, to make it faſt; and two other, wound round two ſmall columns, mount on either ſide ſemicircular-wiſe, as high as the ſaid beam, to which they are faſtened, to keep the triangle ſteady.

IV. *A large* QUADRANT, *whoſe radius is ſix feet.*

The limb is divided into portions of ten ſeconds each; the lead, which ſhews its vertical ſituation, weighs a pound, and hangs from the center by a very fine braſs wire. The index moves eaſily round the limb. A dragon folded in ſeveral rings, and wrap'd up in clouds, ſeizes on all parts the ſeveral plates of the inſtrument to faſten them, leſt they ſhould ſtart out of their due poſition. The whole body of the quadrant hangs in the air, and a fixed axis runs thro' its center, round which the quadrant turns towards the parts of the heavens which the mathematician chooſes to obſerve; and leſt its weight ſhould cauſe it to ſhiver, and loſe its vertical poſition, a beam is raiſed on each ſide, ſecured at the bottom by a dragon,and faſtened to the middle beam or axis by clouds which ſeem to come out of the air. The whole work is ſubſtantial and well contrived.

V. *A* SEXTANT, *whoſe radius is about eight feet.*

This repreſents the ſixth part of a great circle borne by a beam,the baſis of which is concave,made faſt with dragons, and croſſed in the middle by a brazen pillar, on one end of which is an engine, the help of whoſe wheels ſerves to facilitate the motion of that inſtrument. On this engine reſts the middle of a ſmall brazen beam which repreſents a radius of the ſextant, and is faſtnened to it. Its upper part is terminated by a big cylinder, which is the center, round which the index turns; and the lower is extended above two feet beyond the limb, that it may be graſped by the pulley which ſerves to raiſe it. Theſe large and heavy machines are of greater ornament than uſe.

VI. *A* CELESTIAL GLOBE, *of ſix feet diameter.*

This in my opinion is the faireſt and beſt faſhioned of all the inſtruments. The globe itſelf is brazen, exactly round and ſmooth: the ſtars well made, and in their true places, and all the circles of a proportionable breadth and thickneſs. It is beſides ſo well hung that the leaſt touch moves it, and tho' it is above two thouſand weight, the leaſt child may elevate it to any degree. On its large concave baſis are placed oppoſite four dragons, whoſe hair, ſtanding up an end, ſupport a noble horiſon commendable for its breadth, its ſeveral ornaments, and the delicacy and niceneſs of the work. The meridian, in which the pole is fixed, reſts upon clouds that iſſue out of the baſis, and ſlides eaſily between them, its motion being facilitated by ſome hidden wheels, and moves with it the whole globe to give it the required elevation. Beſides which the horiſon, dragons, and the two brazen beams, which lie croſs in the center of the baſis's concavity, are all moved at pleaſure, without ſtirring the baſis which ſtill remains fixed; this facilitates the due placing of the horiſon, whether in reſpect of the natural horiſon, or in reſpect of the globe. I wondered how men, who live ſix thouſand leagues from us, could go through ſuch a piece of work; and I muſt own, that if all the circles, which are divided, had been corrected by ſome of our workmen, nothing could be more perfect in their kind. Theſe machines, being moſt of them above ten feet from the ground, have, for the aſtronomers greater conveniency, marble ſteps round them, cut amphitheater-wiſe.

Altho' theſe inſtrument sſeem ſo extraordinary fine, the Chineſe could never have been perſuaded to make uſe of them, and leave their old ones, without an eſpecial order from the emperor to that effect. They are more fond of the moſt defective piece of antiquity, than of the moſt perfect of the moderns, differing much in that from us who are in love with nothing but what is new. Indeed we are all to blame, for time can add to, or detract nothing from the real worth of things: wherefore we ought to take good care leſt fancy, cuſtom, and prejudice prevail over our underſtanding, which, only perceiving the difference of things, is only able to judge of it. If this failing of the Chineſe extended but to their temporal concerns, the miſchief perhaps would not be great; but it unhappily reaches to the point of religion; and whereas in Europe it ſeems that a doctrine, tho' never ſo abſurd, has a title to our belief when recommended by novelty, in China it is quite contrary; for they think it a ſufficient reaſon to reject the chriſtian faith, becauſe in reſpect of their monarchy it is not old enough: as tho' time and ignorance were to be preferred to truth, or that conſtant cuſtom could render ſuperſtition lawful or reaſonable.

The fondneſs for antiquity, and for the obſervance of ancient cuſtoms, is perhaps what keeps the Chineſe ſo cloſe to their aſtronomical obſervations, in the practice of which they have been very conſtant; but it is a ſhame, that they have during ſo long a time made no greater improvements. One would think, that having watched the motion of the ſtars above 4000 years, they ſhould be perfectly acquainted with them; yet when our miſſionaries entered that country, they found them ſo unſkilful herein, that with all their care they were never able to compoſe an exact calendar; their tables of eclipſes were ſo uncorrect, that ſcarce could they foretel about what time that of the ſun ſhould happen: they are now ſatiſfied in thoſe two particulars; for thoſe fathers have ſettled the calendar; and that, which is given out in the beginning of each year, notes with the greateſt nicety all the motions of the heavens which are during the year to happen out of courſe.

However, they ſtill continue their obſervations. Five mathematicians ſpend every night on the tower, in watching what paſſes over head; one is gazing towards the zenith, another to the eaſt, a third to the weſt, the fourth turns his eyes ſouthwards, and a fifth northwards, that nothing of what happens in the four corners of the world may eſcape their diligent obſervation. They take notice of the winds, the rain, the air, of unuſual phenomena, ſuch as eclipſes, the conjunction or oppoſition of planets, fires, meteors, and whatever may be any ways uſeful. This they keep a ſtrict account of, which they bring in every morning to the ſurveyor of the mathematicks, to be regiſtered in his office. If this had always been practiſed by able and careful mathematicians, we ſhould have a great number of curious remarks; but beſides that, theſe aſtronomers are very unſkilful, they take little care to improve that ſcience; and provided their ſalary be paid as uſual, and their income conſtant, they are in no great trouble about the alterations and changes which happen in the ſky. But if theſe phenomena are very apparent, as when there happens an eclipſe, or a comet, they dare not then be altogether ſo negligent.

All nations have ever been aſtoniſhed at eclipſes, becauſe they could not diſcover the cauſe of them; there is nothing ſo extravagant as the ſeveral reaſons ſome have given for it; but one would wonder that the Chineſe, who as to aſtronomy may juſtly claim ſeniority over all the world beſides, have reaſoned as abſurdly on that point as the reſt. They have fancied that in heaven there is a prodigious great dragon, who is a profeſſed enemy to the ſun and moon, and ready at all times to eat them up. For this reaſon, as ſoon as they perceive an eclipſe, they all make a terrible rattling with drums and braſs kettles, till the monſter frightened at the noiſe lets go his prey. Perſons of quality, who have read our books, have for theſe ſeveral years been undeceived; but (eſpecially if the ſun loſeth its light) the old cuſtoms are ſtill obſerved at Pekin, which, as is uſual, are both very ſuperſtitious and very ridiculous. While the aſtronomers are on the tower to make their obſervations, the chief Mandarines belonging to the Lipou fall on their knees in a hall or court of the palace, looking attentively that way, and frequently bowing towards the ſun to expreſs the pity they take of him, or rather to the dragon, to beg him not to moleſt the world, by depriving it of ſo neceſſary a planet.

The mathematicians muſt be ſure to relate nothing concerning the eclipſes but what will certainly happen; for ſhould it happen ſooner or later, be greater or leſs, longer or ſhorter, the ſurveyor and his brethren would go near to loſe their places. But this is taken care of, for the Mandarines, who are to take the obſervations, never fail to regiſter them according to the predictions; ſo that, if they have their fees, the heavens may take their courſe.

I am afraid, my lord, that I have been too tedious in this digreſſion; your highneſs, having for theſe ſeveral years been buſied in affairs of greater moment, muſt needs have little regard for ſuch abſtruſe notions, unfit to excite you to thoſe elevated ſentiments ſo natural to ſuch great ſouls as yours, and I might have ſpent my time more to your ſatisfaction in writing the wars of the Tartars, and the conqueſt of China. But beſides the inclination every man has to ſpeak of what belongs to his profeſſion, I have, perhaps, been overruled by the habit we contract in China to entertain great perſons with theſe matters; and have hoped, that a prince curious, and endowed with a genius to which nothing is impoſſible, would with patience hear that, which makes the delight of the greateſt and moſt learned emperor in the whole world.

I ſhould do Pekin a very great injuſtice if I paſſed over in ſilence its noble gates and ſtately walls, which indeed become an imperial city. The former are not imbelliſhed with ſtatues or other carving as are moſt publick buildings in China; but all their beauty conſiſts in a prodigious height, which at a diſtance makes the fineſt ſhow in the world. They conſiſt in two large ſquare buildings built ſeparately, but bound together by two tall and very thick walls, ſo that they form a ſquare which may contain above five hundred men in battle. The firſt building, which looks like a fortreſs, faces the road. There is no way thro' it, but you go in at the ſide-wall, where there is a gate proportionable to all the reſt; then you turn to the right, and meet with the ſecond tower which commands the city, and has a gate like the former, but whoſe gate-way is ſo long, that it grows dark towards the middle. There they conſtantly keep a Corps du Guard, and a ſmall magazine to ſupply it readily with ſtores in caſe of neceſſity.

If you reſpect only the neatneſs of the workmanſhip, and the ornaments of architecture, I muſt, indeed, confeſs, that the gates of Paris are incomparably finer. But yet, when a man approaches Pekin, he muſt own that theſe immenſe buildings, and, if I may ſpeak it, the rudeneſs of theſe auguſt buildings have a beauty preferable to all our ornaments. The arches are built with marble, and the reſt with very large brick, bound with excellent mortar.

The walls are anſwerable to their gates, ſo tall that they hide the whole city, and ſo thick, that centries on horſeback are placed upon them. From place to place, at a bow's-ſhot diſtance, they are defended with ſquare towers. The ditch is dry, but very broad and deep. All is regular, and as well kept as if they were in continual apprehenſion of a ſiege. This, my lord, is a pretty exact deſcription of the chief city of China, remarkable for its extent, large gates, ſtrong walls, ſumptuous palace, good garriſon (which conſiſts in the beſt forces of the whole empire) and the number of its inhabitants, but commendable for nothing elſe.

What may be ſaid of all the reſt in general is this; the Chineſe divide them into two kinds. Thoſe which are ſolely deſigned for the defence of the country they call Cities of war, and the reſt Towns of traffick. The fortified places which I have ſeen are not much ſtronger than the others, unleſs it be by their ſituation, which makes ſome almoſt inacceſſible. The frontier towns, eſpecially thoſe near Tartary, are ſomewhat ſingular; and our miſſionaries have aſſured me, that there were ſeveral narrow paſſages ſo well fortified, that it was almoſt impoſſiple to force them: I myſelf have ſeen ſome which a hundred men might eaſily defend againſt a whole army. Their uſual fortifications are a good bulwark, ſome towers, brick-walls, and a large deep ditch, filled with running water. The Chineſe are ſkilled in no other manner of fortification, which we ought not to wonder at, ſince ourſelves knew no better before cannons were in uſe, which has put us upon inventing new ways of defending our cities, as there were new ones contrived of attacking them.

I confeſs, my lord, that in viewing all thoſe cities which their inhabitants eſteem the ſtrongeſt in the world, I have often, with no little pleaſure, thought with myſelf how eaſily Lewis the Great would ſubdue thoſe provinces, if nature had made us a little nearer neighbours to China; he whom the ſtouteſt places in Europe can at beſt withſtand but during a few days. God has, by an equal and juſt diſtribution, given the Chineſe but mean ſoldiers, becauſe no extraordinary actions could be performed there; but to vanquiſh ſuch enemies as ours, ſo great an hero was wholly neceſſary.

It muſt however be granted, that in the way of fortification the Chineſe have outdone all the ancients in the prodigious work that defends part of their country. 'Tis that which we call the Great Wall, and which themſelves ſtile Van li Cham, Chim, the wall 10000 ſtadiums long, which reaches from the eaſtern ocean to the province of Xanſi: not that its length is ſo great as they ſpeak it; but if you reckon all its windings, it will really appear to be no leſs than 500 leagues. You muſt not conceive it as a plain wall, for it is fortified with towers much like the city walls I have mentioned; and in the places where the paſſes might be more eaſily forced, they have raiſed two or three bulwarks one behind another, which may give themſelves a mutual defence, whoſe enormous thickneſs, and the forts which command all the avenues, being all guarded by great numbers of forces, protect the Chineſe from all attempts on that ſide.

China being divided from Tartary by a chain of mountains, the wall has been carried on over the higheſt hills, and is now tall and then low, as the ground allowed; for you muſt not think, as ſome have imagined, that the top of it is level throughout, and that from the bottom of the deepeſt vales it could have been raiſed to be as high as the talleſt mountains. So when they ſay that it is of a wonderful height, we muſt underſtand it of the ſpot of ground it is built on, for of itſelf it is rather lower than thoſe of their cities, and but four, or at moſt, five feet in thickneſs.

It is almoſt all built with brick, bound with ſuch ſtrong mortar, that not only it has laſted theſe ſeveral ages, but is ſcarce the worſe. It is above 1800 years ſince emperor Chihohamti raiſed it, to prevent the inſurrections of the neighbouring Tartars. This was at once one of the greateſt and maddeſt undertakings that I ever heard of; for though indeed it was a prudent caution of the Chineſe thus to guard the eaſieſt avenues, how ridiculous was it of them to carry their wall to the top of ſome precipices which the birds can ſcarce reach with their flight, and on which it is impoſſible the Tartarian horſe ſhould aſcend: and if they could fancy that an army could have clambered up thither, how could they believe that ſo thin and low a wall, as they have made it in ſuch places, could be of any defence?

As for my part, I admire how the materials have been conveyed and made uſe of there; and indeed, it was not done without a vaſt charge, and the loſs of more men than would have periſhed by the greateſt fury of their enemies. It is ſaid, that during the reigns of the Chineſe emperors, this wall was guarded by a million of ſoldiers; but now that part of Tartary belongs to China, they are content with manning well the worſt ſituated, but beſt fortified parts of it.

Among the other fortreſſes of the kingdom, there are above a thouſand of the firſt rate; the reſt are leſs remarkable, and indeed ſcarce deſerve that name; yet all are very well garriſoned, and by that one may judge what vaſt armies are conſtantly kept on foot. However, this is not the only part in which China excels other nations, for to conſider her only in her military capacity will hardly raiſe our wonder; but who can enough admire the numbers, greatneſs, beauty, and government of their trading towns? They are generally divided into three claſſes; of the firſt there are above 160, of the ſecond 270, and of the third near 1200, beſides near 300 walled cities more, which they leave out as not worth obſerving, tho' they come but little ſhort of either of them, either in the number of inhabitants or greatneſs of trade. The greater and leſſer villages are numberleſs, eſpecially thoſe of the ſouthern provinces. In the provinces of Xanſi and Xenſi they are for the moſt part ſurrounded with walls and good ditches, with iron gates, which the country people ſhut at night, and guard in the day time, to protect themſelves from thieves, and from the inſults of the ſoldiers, who are not always to be kept in by their officers.

The largeneſs of theſe cities is not leſs amazing than their number. Pekin, which I have already had the honour to mention to your highneſs, is not to be compared to Nankim; or, as it is now called, Kiamnim, a town formerly incloſed within three walls, the outermoſt of which was 16 long leagues round: ſome works of it are ſtill to be ſeen, which one would rather think to be the bounds of a province than a city. When the emperors kept their court there, its inhabitants were, no doubt, numberleſs. Its ſituation, haven, plenty, the fertility of the neighbouring lands, and the canals made near it, for the improvement of trade, could not but make it a fine city: it has ſince loſt much of its former ſplendor. However, if you include thoſe who live in its ſuburbs, and on the canals, it is ſtill more populous than Pekin; and tho' the unarable hills, the ploughed lands, gardens, and vaſt empty places which are within its walls, render it really leſs than it ſeems, yet what is inhabited does ſtill make a prodigious big city.

The ſtreets are not very broad, but very well paved, the houſes low, but cleanly, and the ſhops very rich, being filled with ſtuffs, ſilks, and other coſtly wares: in a word, it is as the center of the empire, where you may find all the curioſities which are any where found in the whole kingdom. There the moſt famous doctors and the Mandarines, who are out of buſineſs, uſually ſettle themſelves, having the conveniency of ſeveral libraries filled with choice of good books; their printing is fairer, their artificers are better workmen, the tongue more polite, and the accent ſmoother than any where elſe; and truly no other city were ſo proper for the emperor's ſeat, were it not for the ſtates advantage that he ſhould reſide near the frontiers. It is alſo famous on other accounts.

Firſt, for the river Kiam on which it is ſituated, which is the largeſt, deepeſt, and moſt navigable in the whole empire; being, in that part of it which bathes the city, near half a league broad.

Secondly, the royal obſervatory on the top of a mountain, where ſtood formerly a platform and proper inſtruments (which were ſince removed to Pekin) but now only ſome old buildings remain, and a large ſquare hall, newly built as an acknowledgment of the emperor Camhy's kind viſit to that city. This was a trick of the Mandarines, who, under pretence of raiſing a monument of that prince's favour, got conſiderable ſums of money from the inhabitants, not half of which was laid out.

In the third place for a large tower, vulgarly called the China-Tower. There is without the city (and not within, as ſome have wrote) a houſe named by the Chineſe, the Temple of Gratitude (*Pao gren-ſſe*) built 300 years ago by the emperor Yonlo. It is raiſed on a maſſive baſis, built with brick and ſurrounded with a rail of unpoliſhed marble; there are ten or twelve ſteps all round it, by which you aſcend to the lowermoſt hall, the floor of which ſtands one foot higher than the baſis, leaving a little walk two feet wide all round it.

The front of this hall or temple is adorned with a gallery and ſome pillars. The roofs (for in China there are uſually two, one next to the top of the wall, and a narrower over that) are covered with green varniſhed ſhining tiles; and the ceiling within is painted and made up of ſeveral little pieces differently wrought one within the other, which with the Chineſe is no ſmall ornament. I confeſs that medley of beams, joiſts, rafters, and pinions is a ſingularity which ſurpriſes us, becauſe we muſt needs judge that ſuch a walk was not done without great expence; but to ſpeak truth it proceeds only from the ignorance of their workmen, who never could find out that noble ſimplicity, in which conſiſts both the ſtrength and beauty of our buildings.

This hall has no light but what comes in at the doors, of which there are three very large ones that give admittance into the tower I ſpeak of, which is part of this temple. It is of an octangular figure, about 40 feet broad, ſo that each ſide is 15 feet wide. A wall in the like form is built round it, at two fathoms and a half diſtance; and, being moderately high, ſupports the one ſide of the pent-houſe, which iſſues from the tower, and thus makes a pretty kind of a gallery. This tower is nine ſtories high, each ſtory being adorned with a corniſh three feet wide at the bottom of the windows, and diſtinguiſhed by little pent-houſes like the former, but narrower, and (like the tower itſelf) decreaſing in breadth as they increaſe in height.

The wall is, at the bottom, at leaſt 12 feet thick, and above eight and a half at the top, caſed with China-ware laid flat-wiſe; for tho' the weather has ſomething impaired its beauty, there is yet enough remaining to ſhew that it is real China, tho' of the coarſer ſort, ſince 'tis impoſſible that bricks could have retained that luſtre above 300 years.

The ſtair-caſe within is narrow and troubleſome, the ſteps being very high. Each ſtory is made up of thick pieces of timber laid croſs-wiſe, and on them a floor, the ceiling of each room being beautified with paintings, if ſuch painting as theirs can be called a beauty. The walls of the upper rooms bear ſeveral ſmall niches full of carved idols, which make a pretty kind of checquer. The whole work is gilt, and looks like carved ſtone or marble; but I believe it to be only brick, for the Chineſe are very ſkilful in ſtamping all kinds of ornaments on it, which thro' the fineneſs of their ſifted mould becomes more eaſy to them than to us.

The firſt floor is the moſt lofty, but the reſt are of an equal height. I have told the ſteps, which are 190 in number, being almoſt all 10 large inches high, having meaſured them very nicely, which amounts to 158 feet. If you add to this the height of the baſis, that of the ninth ſtory, which has no ſteps to mount thence to the top, and the cupola, the ſum will be at leaſt 200 feet in height from the ground.

This cupola is none of the leaſt ornaments of that building, being, as it were, an extraordinrry thick maſt, or may-pole, which, from the floor of the eighth ſtory, riſes above 30 feet higher than the top of the tower. Round it a great piece of iron runs in a ſpiral line, ſeveral feet diſtant from the pole, ſo that it looks like a hollow cave, on the top of which is placed a very large golden ball. This it is that the Chineſe call the Porcelain Tower, and which ſome Europeans would name the Brick-one. Whatever it may be made of, it is undoubtedly the beſt contrived and nobleſt ſtructure of all the Eaſt. From its top you have a proſpect of the whole city, and eſpecially of the mountain on which ſtands the obſervatory, which lies a good league north eaſt and by eaſt from it.

Namkin was alſo famous for the bigneſs of its bells, but their weight having worn down the ſteeple which they were hung in, the whole building fell down, and they ſtill lie upon the ground. There is one in the way between our college and the obſervatory, whoſe height is 11 feet, and that of its handle or ear by which it hangs, 2, and its diameter is 7; the outward circumference is 22 feet, which indeed leſſens towards the top, but not in the ſame proportion with our bells here, for the figure is almoſt a cylinder, if you take away a conſiderable ſwelling towards the middle, where the circumference is equal to that of the bottom. Its lower brim is ſix inches and a half thick, but grows thinner and thinner, to the bowing where the cone begins, ſo that under the ear it is not above 2 inches thick; which may be meaſured exactly enough, becauſe they pierce their bells at the top to increaſe their ſound as they fancy. The metal is brittle, and very ill caſt, being full of little knobs.

Theſe bells were caſt during the ninth reign before this. Each have their particular name; the one being called Tchoui, the Hanger; another, Che, the Eater; a third, Choui, or So, the Sleeper; and a fourth, Si, the Flier; for tho' there are but 3 in the city, the Chineſe geographers place a 4th beyond the river Kiam. Now, ſuppoſing that a cubical foot of braſs weigh 648 *l.* the bell which I meaſured ſhould weigh about 90,000, ſuppoſing it to be of an equal bigneſs and thickneſs. As for the bigneſs, there is no great difference, but the thickneſs leſſens from the bottom to the top, where, as I have ſaid, it is but two inches thick; ſo that allowing it to be one with another four inches thick and better throughout, the bell will weigh about 50,000 *l.* and be twice as heavy as that at Erfort, which father Kircher affirms to be the biggeſt in the world.

But this is nothing to what there is at Pekin, which can ſhew ſeven caſt under the reign of the emperor Yonlo, near 300 years ago, weighing 120,000 *l.* each. They are 11 feet wide, 40 round, and 12 high, beſides the ear, which is at leaſt 3 foot in height. This, my lord, I own is ſurpriſing, and could ſcarce be believed, had we not father Verbieſt's word for it, who himſelf has exactly meaſured them.

But as much as their bells exceed ours in bigneſs, ſo much do ours exceed them in ſound, whether our metal or way of caſting be better. Be pleaſed however to read what father Magalhaens writes of that which is in the palace at Pekin. *Its ſound*, ſays he, *is ſo clear, ſo pleaſant, and harmonious, that it ſeems to proceed from a muſical inſtrument much rather than a bell.* All this muſt be underſtood comparatively; and perhaps the author had never heard any thing of that kind like it. As for my part, all the bells, I have heard there, have ſeemed to me to make but a dull, obſcure noiſe, as one may eaſily imagine, for their clappers are not made of iron but wood. However that be (for it deſerves not a longer inquiry) it is certain, that the Chineſe have in all their cities very big ones, with which they diſtinguiſh the five watches of the night; which they reckon from ſeven or eight of the clock in the evening: they begin the firſt with ſtriking once, which they repeat a moment after, and ſo on till the ſecond watch, then they ſtrike two ſtrokes, and at the third watch three, and ſo on: ſo that theſe bells are as ſo many repeating clocks, which every other moment inform you what time of night it is. They alſo uſe for the ſame purpoſe a very great drum, which they beat in the ſame manner.

Theſe two imperial cities, which I have now been deſcribing, might alone render China deſervedly famous, but the metropolis's of moſt provinces are ſo big, that each were fit to be the chief of an empire. Sigan, the capital city of Xenſi, is three leagues round. I have had the curioſity to meaſure it my ſelf, which was not difficult; the walls which incloſe it making an exact ſquare. Its ditches, which are partly dry and partly filled with water, are very fine; its walls thick and tall, as well as the ſquare towers that defend them; its bulwarks very broad, and its gates, at leaſt ſome, moſt ſtately, and like thoſe at Pekin. The city is divided into two parts by an earthen wall, which runs almoſt from one end to the other. The one half is inhabited by the Tartars, who keep the biggeſt garriſon, tho' in the other, where the Chineſe dwell, there are alſo a good body of troops. There may ſtill be ſeen an old palace, the reſidence of the ancient kings of that country, who were powerful, not only becauſe of the vaſt extent of their dominions, but alſo thro' the bravery and courage of their ſubjects; for, among all the Chineſe, there are not any better proportioned, or more ſtrong, ſtout, and laborious than theſe. As for the houſes, they are, as every where elſe in China, low, and not over-well built; their furniture is not ſo neat as in the ſouthern parts, their varniſh not ſo ſmooth, their China not ſo plentiful, nor their workmen ſo ingenious.

Hamcheu, the chief city of the province of Chekiam, is alſo one of the richeſt and greateſt in the empire. The Chineſe ſay it is four leagues round, and, I believe, they tell no lye. The ſtreets are as full of people as at Paris, and the ſuburbs beſides being very large, and the canals crouded with an infinite number of boats, I believe it to be as populous as the greateſt cities in Europe. The garriſon conſiſts in 10000 men, 3000 of which are Chineſe. The water of their canals is not clear, nor their ſtreets broad, but the ſhops are neat, and the merchants there are reputed to be very rich.

Eaſtwards from the city runs a river half a league broad, being near the ſea, but indeed not very conſiderable, for a little higher it is but an uſeleſs torrent, which runs thro' abundance of rocks. A lake lies cloſe to it to the weſtwards, which is about two leagues round. The water is clear, but very ſhallow; deep enough however for ſome large flat-bottom'd boats, which the Chineſe keep there, like ſo many floating iſlands, where their young people take their pleaſure. In the middle ſtands an iſland where they uſually land, having built there a temple and ſome houſes for their diverſion. Of this lake ſome relations have made an inchanted place. I have read that it was built round with ſtately houſes and noble palaces. This might be; but if true, a great care was certainly taken that not ſo much as the leaſt track or memory of it ſhould remain. But perhaps they gave that name to ſome wooden thatched dwellings, in which *China* does every where abound; then indeed a ſhort while might make great alterations, for time needs not uſe its utmoſt efforts to pull them down. However, if this city is not ſo eminent for buildings, it is commendable for being one of the beſt ſituated in the empire, for the prodigious number of its inhabitants, the conveniency of its canals, and the great traffick which is made there in the fineſt ſilks in the world.

What is ſurpriſing in China is, that whereas, being gone thro' one of theſe cities, you would ſcarce expect to meet with the like, you are hardly out of ſight of it before you are in view of ſuch another. As for example; going along the great canal from *Hamcheu* you come to *Sucheu*, which is not far from it, and, if you believe the inhabitants, contains four leagues in circuit, being indeed of a vaſt extent It is alſo the uſual reſidence of a viceroy, and has as great a trade as any city in the empire. I do not find it to be proportionably as populous as thoſe I have mentioned; but the ſuburbs and multitude of boats amaze new comers. Thoſe who have the patience to ſpend a few minutes on the water-ſide, and view the throngs of people that come to cheapen commodities, would imagine it to be a fair, to which the whole empire were crouding; and the officers there, tho' not over ſtrict, are ſo buſied in receiving the cuſtoms, that they are obliged to put off to the next day a great many traders, who come to make their payments. This continual hurry, among the moſt covetous nation in the world, ſhould, one would imagine, occaſion frequent quarrels; but their government is ſo good, and the Mandarines orders ſo ſtrictly obſerved, that beſides abuſive language, in which the *Chineſe* are very fluent, other injuries are ſeldom offered. Not far from Sucheu, you meet with other cities at ſmall diſtances from each other, ſome a league and a half, and ſome two leagues round. As ſoon as you are come to the river Kiam, you meet with Chinkiam, a town built on its banks, one of whoſe very ſuburbs, which lies north-weſt, is a large German league in circuit; this place is ſo populous, that, when I paſſed thro' it, it was no ſmall trouble to me to make my way thro' the crowd, which is uſually as great in thoſe ſtreets as here at a ſolemn proceſſion. Overagainſt it, on the other ſide of the river, ſtands Qua-chéou another great trading town; a little beyond lies Yamcheu, one of the moſt remarkable cities in the whole empire, which, according to the Chineſe, contains two millions of inhabitants.

If I did not here recal myſelf, I ſhould unawares deſcribe all the cities of China; but deſigning only to give your highneſs a general account of their largeneſs and number, I ſhall, without a needleſs, tedious deſcending into particulars, aſſure your eminency that myſelf have ſeen ſeven or eight of them as big at leaſt as Paris, beſides ſeveral others where I have not been, which I am aſſured are not leſs. There are fourſcore of the firſt rank, equal to Lyons or Bourdeaux. Among 260 of the ſecond, above a hundred are like Orleance; and among 1200 of the third, there are five or ſix hundred as conſiderable as Rochel or Angouleſme; beſides an innumerable quantity of villages greater and more populous than Marenes and St. John de Luz. Theſe, my lord, are no hyperboles, neither do I ſpeak by hear-ſay; but having travelled in perſon over the greateſt part of China, I hope your highneſs will favour me ſo far, as not to queſtion the ſincerity of my relation.

I ſhall conclude with the ſeveral ports and havens of China, which do not a little contribute to the increaſe of its wealth. The Chineſe emperors had forbid the entrance of them to foreigners; but the

Tartars, more fond of money than of ancient cuſtoms, have of late years granted a free acceſs to all nations.

The firſt beginning ſouthwards is Macao, famous for the great traffick which the Portugueze formerly made there, before the Dutch had expelled them out of the greateſt part of the Indies. They ſtill have a fortreſs in it, but their garriſon is ſmall, as indeed they are not able to keep a very great one. Beſides, their beſt way to maintain themſelves in this poſt is, to ingratiate themſelves with the Chineſe, by a blind obſequiouſneſs to all their commands, which they do very wiſely. The town, if I may ſo call a few houſes not incloſed with any walls, is built on a narrow uneven ſoil, on the point of a ſmall iſland which commands a good road, where ſhips, by the means of ſeveral other little iſlands which lie to the windwards, are ſecure from any ſtorm. The haven is narrow, but ſafe and commodious. All the cuſtoms belong to the emperor; and tho' the Portugueze do ſtill preſerve a form of government among themſelves, yet they obey the Mandarines in whatſoever bears the leaſt relation to the Chineſe.

The ſecond haven of this coaſt is formed by a pretty wide river, up the which great veſſels can go as far as Canton. This place is very convenient for foreigners, becauſe the city ſupplies them with abundance of all kinds of merchandizes and refreſhments: but the Mandarines are not fond of letting them approach too near their walls, leſt they ſhould be ſurprized; or rather, they are unwilling that their merchants ſhould deal with ours, ſince theMandarines ſell them the European effects underhand, by other perſons whom they employ.

The province of Fokien, adjoining to that of Canton, has another celebrated haven, which they call Emoui, from the iſland which forms it, for it is, properly ſpeaking, but a road lock'd in on the one hand by the continent, and on the other by the ſaid iſland. The biggeſt ſhips ride here ſecure, and the banks are ſo high, that they may come as near the ſhore as they will. The late great improvement of trade in that city invites to it a conſiderable number of people, and this poſt has been judged of ſuch a conſequence, that the emperor has for ſome years paſt kept there a garriſon of ſix or ſeven thouſand men under a Chineſe commander.

The fourth, called Nimpo, lies in the moſt eaſterly part of China; there it was we landed. The entrance is very difficult, and wholly impracticable to great veſſels, the bar at the higheſt tides not being above 15 foot under water. That place has nevertheleſs a very great trade; for thence they make a ſpeedy voyage to Japan, being but two days in their paſſage to Nangazaki. Thither they carry ſilks, ſugar, drugs and wine, which they exchange for gold, ſilver and braſs.

Nimpo is a city of the firſt claſs, and was in former times very remarkable, but has been much damaged by the late wars; however, it daily regains ſomething of its former ſplendor; the walls are in a good condition, the city and ſuburbs well inhabited, and the garriſon pretty numerous. The town is ſtill full of a kind of monuments, called by the Chineſe Paiſam, or Pailou, and by us triumphal arches, which are very frequent in China.

They conſiſt in three great arches abreaſt, built with long marble ſtones; that in the middle is much higher than the other two. The four columns which ſupport them are ſometimes round, but oftener ſquare, made of one only ſtone placed on an irregular baſis. In ſome no baſis is to be ſeen, whether they never had any, or that thro' age it was ſunk into the ground. They have no capitals, but the trunk is faſtened into the architrave, if we will give that name to ſome figures over the pillars. The frize is better diſtinguiſhed, but too high in proportion to the reſt; they adorn it with inſcriptions, beautiful figures, and emboſſed ſculptures; with knots wrought looſe one within another, with flowers curiouſly carved, and birds flying as it were from the ſtone, which in my mind are maſter-pieces.

Not that all theſe arches are of this make; ſome are ſo ordinary that they are not worth the ſeeing; but others there are which cannot enough be prized. Inſtead of a corniſh, they have before and behind large flat marble ſtones like pent-houſes. There are ſo many of theſe monuments at Nimpo, that in ſome places they are more a trouble than an ornament, tho' at a diſtance they make an agreeable proſpect.

I have omitted the haven of Nankim, which, in reaſon, becauſe of the breadth and depth of the river Kiam, ſhould have been firſt in order; but no ſhips put in there at preſent. I do not know whether the mouth of the ſaid river is now choaked up with ſand; but ſure I am, that the whole fleet of that famous pyrate, who beſieged Nankim during the late troubles, paſſed it without any difficulty; and perhaps it is to prevent any ſuch accident for the future, that the Chineſe will not make uſe of it, that by degrees it may grow out of knowledge.

This, my lord, is in general what may be ſaid of the ports, fortreſſes and cities of China, the number of which is ſo great, that ſcarce can a traveller diſtinguiſh them, they lie ſo thick together; therefore the Chineſe have ever thought that no nation in the world was to be compared to them, much like thoſe people whom the prophet repreſents, ſaying, * *This is that great and glorious city which has ſubſiſted for ſo many years, and ſaith, I truly am a*

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* *Zeph.* ii. 15.

city, and there is none beſides me. The Chineſe indeed were ſomething excuſable in this point, ſince they knew of nothing beyond the ſeas of Japan and foreſts of Tartary; but what we have told 'em, that the weſt had alſo its cities and kingdoms, which in ſeveral things exceeds theirs, has very much humbled them, being not a little vexed, that their title to univerſal monarchy ſhould now be queſtioned, after having enjoy'd it above 4000 years.

Our comfort, my lord, is, that theſe proud cities, which ſtiled themſelves Ladies of the Univerſe, have been forced to open their gates to the goſpel, and are partly ſubdued by our religion. * *Thoſe that dwelt in high places have bowed their heads, and the Lord has in a holy manner brought low the lofty cities.* This, my lord, has often ſupported me in the midſt of my labours and travels. I have ſeen but few cities where chriſtianity had made no progreſs; and among thoſe crowds of worſhippers of Belial, I have obſerved a choſen people which worſhipped the Lord in ſpirit and truth. Our churches are now the ornament of thoſe very cities, which during ſo many ages had been defiled with idols; and the croſs, raiſed above their houſes, confounds ſuperſtition, and gains itſelf reſpect from the very Gentiles.

What then remains, my lord, but that we labour with the utmoſt diligence to the perfecting of a work worthy the zeal of the firſt apoſtles. Woe to thoſe who are kept there by the care of the head of the church, and the liberality of chriſtian princes, if thro' negligence, or an ill-grounded cowardice, they fail of rendering the inhabitants of thoſe vaſt cities a holy nation. Hitherto, thro' God's good grace, the miniſters of the goſpel have not been aſhamed of their profeſſion, not before the pagan magiſtrates; and when forced by a long exile to quit their beloved churches, they all might with St. Paul ſay, *You know*

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* *Iſaiah* xxvi. 5.

know I have endeavoured to ſerve the Lord in all humility, with many tears, and notwithſtanding the croſſes I have met with from the heathen; that I have hid nothing from you that might be to your advantage, no hindrance being ſtrong enough to prevent my preaching it both in publick and private; but rather admoniſhing you all to be penitent towards God, and faithful to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

I know that thoſe, who have compoſed whole volumes to cry down our catholick miſſions, will not agree to what I have ſaid. Men, who have once profeſſed themſelves enemies to the orthodox doctrine, attack it every where, and make it their buſineſs to ſlander ſuch as preach it: but it may be a comfort to us, that we have no other adverſaries but thoſe who are ſuch to our church, and that we are only blamed by thoſe whoſe praiſe would be a reproach to us.

However we ſtand in daily need of the aſſiſtance of our kind protectors; for in what part of this world can naked truth and diſtreſſed innocence withſtand alone the force of inveterate malice? In you, my lord, we hope to find one full of zeal and juſtice. The approbation of ſo great a prince, whoſe wit, judgment, and uprightneſs are well known to all Europe, is able alone to ſilence and confound our enemies. And when it is once known that you are in ſome concern for our affairs, that you are ſenſible of our labours, perſuaded that our deſigns are good, and willing to contribute to carry them on; none ſure will then be ſo daring and hardened a calumniator as to ſpeak againſt our miſſions to China, or reflect on our conduct in that country. I am with profound reſpect,

My Lord,
Your Eminence's moſt
humble and obedient Servant,
L. J.

LETTER IV.

To the Count de CRECY.

Of the Clime, Soil, Canals, Rivers, and Fruits of CHINA.

My Lord,

THE French miſſionaries to China are ſo highly obliged to your whole family, that among the moſt important commands, they have honoured me with for Europe, that of returning you their hearty thanks was earneſtly recommended to my care.

I know, my lord, that, how great ſoever your favours may have been, your ſeveral employments, and the unbounded application with which you ſerve his majeſty, have ſomewhat curbed your zeal.

But what is not owing from us to that other ſelf of yours (pardon the expreſſion) whom his blood, name, wit, and a thouſand excellent qualifications do ſo confound with you, that we can ſcarce diſtinguiſh the one from the other? In all our travels in which ſome of us have already reckoned above 40000 leagues, we have not made a ſtep without his orders and aſſiſtance. His zeal has excited us to noble enterprizes, his prudence directed us how to carry them on, his courage ſtrengthened us againſt all oppoſition, and I hope his unſhaken conſtancy will at laſt give ſucceſs to one of the moſt noble atchievements that this age has produced, to our church's good, to the improvement of learning, and to his glory who ſways the Gallick ſcepter.

Thus, my lord, while you make known his name in the ſeveral courts of Europe, he ſpreads yours abroad thro' the new world, where he is equally reverenced by the preachers of the goſpel, whoſe ſupport he is, and dreaded by thoſe of paganiſm and idolatry, whoſe ruin he is the occaſion of. I the more willingly do juſtice to his merit, becauſe I cannot write on a ſubject more agreeable to your lordſhip; and if I had not already ſpoke of it in private converſation, I were to blame to give over ſo ſoon.

But after having indulged a father's tenderneſs, is it not time you ſhould ſatisfy a ſtateſman's curioſity? I have often deſcribed Europe to the Chineſe, who have admired its politeneſs, beauty, and magnificence; it is but juſt that I make China known to that European, who is beſt able to judge of its true grandeur. I have, my lord, pitched upon the following particulars, being ſuch as will give you a true idea of that country, and will, perhaps, give ſome pleaſure in the reading.

China being of a large extent, the nature of the ſoil is different, according to its particular ſituation, as it lies more or leſs ſouthwards. I can however aſſure your lordſhip, that the leaſt of its fifteen provinces is ſo populous and fertile, that in Europe it would make alone a conſiderable ſtate; and a prince, who ſhould enjoy it, might have wealth and ſubjects enough to content a moderate ambition.

This land, like all others, is divided into hills and plains; but the latter are ſo even, that one would think the Chineſe have ever ſince the foundation of their monarchy been employ'd in nothing elſe but levelling them, and making them into gardens; and their manner of meliorating the ground being to let water thro' it, they could not deviſe a better way to diſtribute it equally; elſe thoſe parts which lie higheſt would have laboured under a continual drought, and the reſt lain always under water.

This courſe they take in tilling and manuring their hills, for they cut them out like a pair of ſtairs from the foot to the top, that the rain water may ſpread equally, and not waſh down the ground with its ſeeds.

Thus they have, as it were, forced nature, by making artificial plains, where ſhe had raiſed mountains; and a long ſeries of ſuch hills ſurrounded and crowned, as I may ſay, with a hundred ſuch terraſſes, loſing in breadth as they gain in height, and whoſe ſoil is as fruitful as that of the beſt cultivated vallies, muſt needs make a very entertaining landskip.

It is true that their mountains are not for the moſt part ſo ſtony as ours, their mould is rather light, porous, and eaſily cut; and, what is moſt ſurprizing, ſo deep, that in moſt provinces you may dig three or four hundred feet in depth before you come to the rock. This does not a little contribute to its goodneſs, becauſe the continual tranſpiration of ſalt ſpirits is ever renewing it, and this endues the ſoil with a perpetual fertility.

Nature has not however been equal in her diſtribution, ſhe was leſs laviſh to the provinces of Xenſi, Honan, Quamtum, and Fokien. Yet even their mountains are not wholly uſeleſs, bearing all kinds of trees, which grow tall and ſtreight, and are fit for all kinds of building, eſpecially for ſhipping. The emperor reſerves ſome for his private uſe, and ſometimes ſends 300 leagues for trees of a prodigious bigneſs, of which he makes pillars to his temples or other publick buildings.

The inhabitants alſo trade much in them, for having lopt off all the branches, they tie 80 or 100 of them together, and faſten ſo many ſuch rows one behind another as reach almoſt a mile, which they drag in that manner along the rivers and canals till they have ſold all; for they build them little convenient houſes on theſe kinds of floats, where the timber-merchant, his family, and ſervants lie during the whole voyage, which is ſometimes three or four months long.

They have other mountains which are of a greater and more publick advantage. Thoſe produce iron, tin, braſs, mercury, gold and ſilver. It is true, the ſilver mines are not now made uſe of, whether they think the empire is ſufficiently ſtock'd with it, or that they are unwilling to ſacrifice the lives of poor people, by putting them upon ſo laborious and dangerous a taſk.

As for their gold, the torrents waſh a great quantity away into the plains, which proves the occaſion of a great many peoples livelihood, who have no other occupation than to look for it among the ſand and mud, where they find it ſo pure, that it needs no refining as at Peru.

If you will believe the Chineſe, who themſelves are credulous to an exceſs, their mountains have wonderful properties. Some, they ſay, are ever covered with clouds, while others always continue calm and ſerene. Some produce none but uſeful, wholeſome herbs, while not a rank poiſonous weed can grow there. They affirm, that a hill in the province of Xenſi is ſhaped like a cock, and crows ſometimes ſo loud, as to be heard three leagues off; and that another, in that of Fokien, moves to and fro when a ſtorm approaches, like a tree agitated with the wind. The hoary heads of others are covered with a continual froſt; and there is one in the province of Kiamſi, called the Dragon-Tiger, becauſe the Bonzes pretend that its upper-part is ſhaped like a dragon, and ſeems to aſſault the lower that is like a tiger.

That of Fokien eſpecially is admired, the whole extent of which is nothing elſe but a repreſentation of the idol Foé, ſo hugely big, that its eyes are ſeveral miles broad, and its noſe many leagues in length. I cannot ſuppoſe it to be a piece of Chineſe workmanſhip, for they would not certainly have made its noſe ſo big, who love theirs ſhould be little, which they look upon as a great beauty.

The mountain of Xenſi is no leſs wonderful, for at the ſound of a drum, or any other inſtrument, it breaths out fire and flames, raiſes wind, rains, ſtorms, and what not: and, to conclude, one in the province of Huquam has this ſtrange property, that it makes thieves ſo giddy, that, ſhould they ſteal any thing on it, it would be impoſſible for them to go off with their booty; whereas an eaſy egreſs and regreſs is allowed to ſuch as come thither with an hoſpitable mind.

China abounds in ſuch like curioſities which ſome of our philoſophers admire, and endeavour to reduce to natural principles; but I ſhould rather adviſe them to leave that diſcuſſion to the Chineſe, who, being the authors, ſhould beſt know the cauſes of theſe fancied effects.

The idleſt dream, and that to which they give moſt faith, is, That there is a dragon of an extraordinary ſtrength and ſovereign power. It is in heaven, in the air, on the waters, and uſually among the mountains. They alſo believe, that in thoſe mountains live a ſort of men which they call the Immortal Race, believing really that they never die; and ſome are ſo infatuated with this ridiculous opinion, that they wander among thoſe rocks, and there loſe themſelves in queſt of immortality. There are ſeveral famous grotto's where ſome Bonzes lead a very auſtere life; but for a few that behave themſelves well, abundance, thro' their execrable vices, are grown contemptible to perſons of quality, and odious to the people, who only tolerate them thro' a miſtaken zeal.

The moſt famous temples are alſo built on mountains. Pilgrims repair thither from 200 leagues off, and their number is ſometimes ſo great, that the roads are crowded with them. The women eſpecially are very exact in the performance of this piece of devotion, for having no other opportunity of going abroad, they are glad of that pretence. But theſe holy travels being ſomewhat prejudicial to their virtue, their huſbands are not overwell pleaſed at it; therefore only your ordinary ſort of women undertake theſe pilgrimages; but as for perſons of quality, they force their wives zeal into a narrower compaſs.

If after having viewed their mountains, we take a proſpect of their plains, it muſt be confeſſed, that no art can equal their natural beauty. They are all cultivated, and have neither hedge nor ditch, nor ſcarce a tree, ſo much they are afraid of loſing an inch of ground. In moſt provinces they make harveſt twice a year, and between thoſe two ſeaſons they ſow herbs and pulſe.

All the northern and weſtern provinces, as Pekin, Xanſi, Xenſi, Suchven, bear wheat, barley, ſeveral kinds of millet, and tobacco, with black and yellow peaſe, with which they feed horſes as we do with oats. Thoſe of the ſouth, eſpecially Huquam, Nankim, and Chekiam, are fruitful in rice, it being a low, watery country. The huſbandmen at firſt ſow it diſorderly, like other corn, and when it is grown about two feet from the ground, they pull it up by the roots, and tranſplant it in a ſtrait line, in ſmall parcels like little ſheaves, checquerwiſe, that the ears may ſupport each other, and the eaſier reſiſt the wind; ſo that theſe plains look more like ſpacious gardens than a plain field.

The ſoil is proper for all manner of fruits; it bears pears, apples, apricots, peaches, figs, grapes of all kinds, and eſpecially excellent muſcadines. There are alſo pomegranates, walnuts, cheſnuts, and generally all that we have in Europe. Their olives are different from ours; they preſs no oil out of them, becauſe, perhaps, they are not fit for that purpoſe, or that the Chineſe have not yet thought of it. Their fruit, generally ſpeaking, is not near ſo good as ours, being wholly ſtrangers to the art of grafting. But they have three kinds of melons, which are all excellent: The firſt are ſmall, yellow within, and of a ſweet ſugar taſte, which they eat with the rind as we do an apple: I have not met with thoſe any where but in the province of Xenſi. The others are very big and long, the inſide of ſome are white, and of others red; though they are full of a cooling juice which taſtes like ſugar; they never prove offenſive, and may be eaten during the greateſt heats of ſummer, without fear of a ſurfeit; thoſe are called water-melons. The third ſort are like our ordinary melons.

Beſides the fruits which they have in common with us, others grow there which are not known in Europe. The moſt delicate they call Letchi, and is found in the province of Quamtum. It is as big as a nut, the ſtone is long and big, and the meat on it ſoft and wateriſh, but of a moſt delicious taſte. I know not any fruit in Europe that comes near it. All this is inclos'd in a rough thin rind, and the whole is ſhaped like an egg. It is unwholſome to eat a quantity, and of ſo hot a nature, as to cauſe a man's whole body to break out into pimples. The Chineſe dry it with the rind, and then it grows black and wrinkled like our prunes, and ſo it is preſerved and eat all the year round, being uſed eſpecially in tea, to which it gives a little ſharp taſte, more agreeable than that of ſugar.

In the ſame province, and in that of Fokien, grows another ſmall fruit which they call Louyen, Dragon's Eye. The tree that bears it is large as thoſe which produce our walnuts. This fruit is exactly round, the outer rind being ſmooth and grey, but as it ripens it grows yellowiſh. The meat is white, of a ſharp taſte, and very full of juice, and is fitter for a dyſert to thoſe who have well dined, than to ſatisfy the hungry ſtomach: it is very cool and inoffenſive.

The Séze, another kind of fruit peculiar to China, grows almoſt in all parts of it; of this, as of apples, there are ſeveral kinds. Thoſe in the ſouthern provinces taſte much like ſugar, and melt in one's mouth. In the provinces of Xanſi and Xenſi it is more firm, bigger, and may eaſier be preſerved. The rind of the former is clear, ſmooth, tranſparent, and of a ſhining red colour, eſpecially when the fruit is ripe. Some are in ſhape like an egg, but uſually bigger; the ſeeds are black and flat, and the meat very watery and almoſt liquid, which they ſuck out at one of the ends. When they are dried like our figs they become mealy, but in time there grows a ſort of a ſugar'd cruſt upon them, from which they receive a moſt delicious flavour.

Thoſe in Xanſi are, as I have ſaid, much more firm, their meat being like that of our apples, but of a different colour. Thoſe they either gather early to ripen them on ſtraw, or dip in ſcalding water, to free them of an ill ſoure taſte which they have at firſt gathering. The Chineſe are not over careful of this fruit, it being a natural product of the earth which grows in any ſoil. But did they endeavour to bring it to perfection by grafting, I queſtion not but it might be made an excellent one.

I purpoſely omit their Anana's, Goyaves, Coco's and other fruits, for which they are indebted to the Indies, and which have been abundantly deſcribed in other relations; but I cannot paſs by their oranges, commonly known with us by the name of China Oranges, becauſe the firſt we ſaw of that kind came from thence. The firſt and only tree, out of whoſe ſtock all ours are ſaid to be produced, is ſtill preſerved at Lisbon, in the garden of the count de St. Laurence, and we are indeed beholding to the Portugueze for that delicious fruit; but they brought only of one kind over, tho' there be ſeveral in China.

That which is moſt valued, and ſent as a rarity to the Indies, is no bigger than a billiard ball; the rind is of a reddiſh yellow, fine, clear, and very ſmooth; yet the bigger ſort ſeem to me the beſt; thoſe of Quamtum eſpecially are very agreeable both to our palate and conſtitution: They are commonly given to ſick people, being firſt ſoftened with the fire, then filled with ſugar, which, incorporating with their juice, makes a very ſweet wholſome ſyrup, than which nothing can be better for the lungs. I know not how to diſtinguiſh them from thoſe we have in Provence, and that are brought from Portugal, unleſs by their being more firm, that they are not eaſily parted from the rind, neither are they divided into ſegments like ours, tho' elſe they do not differ in ſhape.

When I was at Siam, moſt of my countrymen were tranſported with the goodneſs of certain oranges whoſe rind is rough, thick, almoſt all over green. They may perhaps be willing to know if China can ſhew any as good. As to matter of taſte, a man does not always agree with himſelf, much leſs can he do ſo with others. All I can ſay to it is, that each is excellent in its kind, and that uſually the laſt eaten ſeem beſt taſted.

Lemons, citrons, and what the Indians call Pampelimouſes, are very common there, and therefore not ſo much regarded as in Europe; but they cultivate with a great deal of care a particular ſpecies of lemon-trees, whoſe fruit being no bigger than a walnut, perfectly round, green and ſharp, are excellent in all kinds of ragouſts, and theſe ſhrubs they often plant in boxes to adorn their courts and halls therewith.

But of all the trees that grow in China, that which produces tallow is in my opinion the moſt prodigious. This very propoſition is no doubt ſurpriſing, and, there being no where elſe any thing like it, will ſeem a paradox; yet there is nothing more true, and perhaps, my lord, a particular account of the nature and properties of ſo extraordinary a tree will not be unwelcome.

It is about the height of our cherry-trees, the branches are crooked, the leaves ſhaped like a heart, of a lively briſk red, its bark ſmooth, the trunk ſhort, and the head round and very thick. The fruit is incloſed within a rind divided into three ſegments, which open when it is ripe, and diſcover three white kernels of the bigneſs of a ſmallnut. All the branches are very thick of it, and this mixture of white and red makes at a diſtance the fineſt proſpect in the world; the fields where theſe trees are planted, which they uſually are in a direct line and checquerwiſe, ſhewing a far off like a vaſt parterre of flower-pots.

But the wonder is, that this kernel has all the qualities of tallow; its odour, colour, and conſiſtency; and they alſo make candles of it, mixing only a little oil when they melt it to make the ſtuff more pliant. If they knew how to purify it as we do our tallow here, I doubt not but their candles might be as good as ours; but they make them very awkwardly, ſo that their ſmell is much ſtronger, their ſmoak thicker, and their light dimmer than ours.

It is true, the fault does not a little lie in the wiek; for inſtead of cotton, tho' they are well ſtocked with that commodity, they uſe a ſmall ſtick of a dry light wood, wrapp'd round with the inner part of a ruſh, which is very porous, and thereby fitted for the filtration of the ſmall particles of that oleous matter by which the flame is preſerved. This wooden wiek, beſides that it does not burn ſo clear as cotton, increaſes the ſmoak, and cauſes an offenſive ſmell.

Among the trees peculiar to the country I am ſpeaking of, I muſt not omit thoſe which bear pepper, not like that which we make uſe of in Europe, but another ſort of ſeed endued with the ſame qualities. They grow on a tree like thoſe which bear our walnuts, about as big as a pea, and of a greyiſh colour, with little red ſtreaks; when they are ripe they open of themſelves, and diſcover a little ſtone as black as jet, caſting a ſtrong ſmell very offenſive to the head, for which reaſon they gather them by intervals, not being able to remain on the tree any conſiderable time. Having expoſed theſe grains to the ſun, they caſt away the ſtone, which is too hot and ſtrong, and only uſe the reſt, which, tho' not quite ſo agreeable as our pepper, is however of good uſe in ſauces.

That you may better judge of the fertility of that vaſt empire, be pleaſed, my lord, to take notice, that there is no place in the world like it for the abundance of roots and pulſe; it is almoſt the only food of the inhabitants, who omit nothing to have them good. It would be too tedious to give you a liſt of all thoſe different herbs; for beſides thoſe we have here, their ground brings forth ſeveral others unknown to us, on which they ſet a greater value. Their care and dexterity herein is beyond all our gardeners performances; and, if our walks excel theirs, they exceed us in their kitchen garden.

Tho' this ſubject, common in itſelf, and not worth your notice, yields no great rarity, I cannot forbear ſpeaking of a kind of onions which I have ſeen; they do not ſeed like ours, but towards the latter end of the ſeaſon their leaves bear ſome ſmall filaments, in the midſt of which is a white onion like that in the ground. This does in time produce its leaves, and thoſe a like head, and ſo on, which grow leſs and ſhorter as they are farther from the ground; the dimenſions are ſo juſt, and the proportions ſo exact, that one would think them artificially done; and it ſeems as if nature were minded to ſhew us that, even ſporting, it can exceed the ſkill of the niceſt artiſt.

If what has been written of what they call Petſi were true, it would be a great wonder. It is a kind of Lenufar, that grows under water, whoſe root is faſtened to a white matter covered with a red ſkin, that divides itſelf into ſeveral heads, which, when freſh, taſte like a ſmall nut. I have been aſſured that it has this property, that it ſoftens braſs, and as it were renders it eatable, if a piece of the metal be put into the mouth with one of this plant.

This ſeemed the ſtranger to me, becauſe the juice which iſſues from it is very mild and cooling, and not endued with any of thoſe corroſive qualities which ſeem neceſſary to work ſuch an effect. As ſoon as we were arrived at Hamcheu, where this Petſi is much eaten, we had the curioſity to inquire into the truth of it; and to that purpoſe took a piece of their money, which was made of a very brittle ſort of molten braſs, and wrapp'd it up in a ſlice of this root; one of us, who had ſtronger teeth than the reſt, broke it into ſeveral pieces, which the others, loath to ſtrain their jaws, had not been able to do; but theſe broken pieces were as hard as ever, which made us think that the root had indeed no other virtue, than that by being wrapp'd round the braſs it ſaved his teeth, which a piece of leather might have done as well. We often repeated the experiment at Kiahim, but with no better ſucceſs; ſo true it is that theſe mighty wonders ſhould be heard twice, before they are once believed.

Tho' China were not of itſelf ſo fruitful a country as I have repreſented it, the canals, which are cut thro' it, were alone ſufficient to make it ſo: but beſides their great uſefulneſs in watering the country, and farthering trade, they add alſo much beauty to it. They are generally of a clear, deep, and running water, that glides ſo ſoftly that it can ſcarce be perceived. There is one uſually in every province, which is to it inſtead of a road, and runs between two banks, built up with flat coarſe marble ſtones, bound together by others which are let into them, in the ſame manner as we uſe to faſten our ſtrong wooden boxes at the corners.

So little care was taken, during the wars, to preſerve works of publick uſe, that this, tho' one of the nobleſt in the empire, was ſpoiled in ſeveral places, which is a great pity; for they are of no little uſe, both to keep in the waters of theſe canals, and for thoſe to walk on who drag the boats along. Beſides theſe cauſeys they have the conveniency of a great many bridges for the communication of the oppoſite ſhores; ſome are of three, ſome five, and ſome ſeven arches, the middlemoſt being always extraordinary high, that the boats may go through without putting down their maſts. Theſe arches are built with large pieces of ſtone or marble, and very well framed, the ſupporters well fitted, and the piles ſo ſmall that one would think them at a diſtance to hang in the air. There are many of thoſe bridges, ſo that where the canal runs in a ſtrait line, as they uſually do, it makes a proſpective at once ſtately and agreeable.

This great canal runs out into ſmaller ones on either ſide, which are again ſubdivided into ſmall rivulets, that end at ſome great town or village: ſometimes they diſcharge themſelves into ſome lake or great pond, out of which all the adjacent country is watered; ſo that theſe clear and plentiful ſtreams, embelliſhed by ſo many fine bridges, bounded by ſuch neat and convenient banks, equally diſtributed into ſuch vaſt plains, covered with a numberleſs multitude of boats and barges, and crowned (if I may uſe the expreſſion) with a prodigious number of towns and cities, whoſe ditches it fills, and whoſe ſtreets it forms, does at once make that country the moſt fruitful and the moſt beautiful in the world.

Surpriſed, and as it were aſtoniſhed at ſo noble a ſight, I have ſometimes bore a ſecret envy to China in Europe's behalf, which muſt own that it can boaſt nothing in that kind to be compared to her. What would it be then, if that art which in the wildeſt and moſt unlikely places has raiſed magnificent palaces, gardens and groves, had been employed in that rich land, to which nature has been laviſh of her moſt precious gifts?

The Chineſe ſay their country was formerly totally overflowed, and that by main labour they drained the water by cutting it a way thro' theſe uſeful canals. If this be true, I cannot enough admire at once the boldneſs and induſtry of their workmen, who have thus made great artificial rivers, and of a kind of a ſea, as it were, created the moſt fertile plains in the world.

It will ſcarce be believed, that men ſo ignorant in the principles of phyſicks, and the art of levelling, could bring ſuch a work as that to perfection; yet it is certain that theſe canals were dug by men; for they are uſually ſtrait, the diſtribution is equal and orderly; there are flood-gates made for the rivers to let in their water at, and others to let it out when they are too full; ſo that it cannot be doubted but that the Chineſe are only beholding to their own induſtry for that great conveniency.

Among all thoſe canals in the ſouthern provinces, one above the reſt is called the Great Canal, becauſe it goes thro' the whole country from Canton, which lies ſouthward to Pekin, ſituated in the moſt northerly parts of the empire. You muſt only travel a ſhort day's journey by land to croſs the hill Moilin, that does on one ſide bound the province of Kiamſi. From this mountain iſſue two rivers; one runs ſouthwards to the ſea, and the other northwards as far as the river of Nankim, whence by the yellow river, and ſeveral canals, you may proceed by water to the very mountains of Tartary.

But, by reaſon in this huge extent of ground, of above four hundred leagues in length, the earth is not level, or, hath not a deſcent proportionable to the emanation of the waters, it was neceſſary to ſet a great number of ſluices a work. They call them ſo in the relations, notwithſtanding they be much different from ours. They are water-falls, and as it were certain torrents, that are precipitated from one canal into another, more or leſs rapid, according to the difference of their level: Now, to cauſe the barques to aſcend, they make uſe of a great company of men, who are maintained for that purpoſe near the ſluice. After they have drawn cables to the right and left to lay hold of the barque, in ſuch a manner that it cannot eſcape from them, they have ſeveral capſtans, by the help of which they raiſe it by little and little, by the main force of their arms, till ſuch time as it be in the upper canal, in a condition to continue its voyage whither it is bound. This ſame labour is tedious, toilſome, and exceeding dangerous. They would be wonderfully ſurpriſed, ſhould they behold with what eaſineſs one man alone, who opens and ſhuts the gates of our ſluices, makes the longeſt and heavieſt laden barques ſecurely to aſcend and deſcend.

I have obſerved in ſome places of China, where the waters of two canals or channels have no communication together, yet for all that, they make the boats to paſs from the one to the other, notwithſtanding the level may be different above fifteen feet: and this is the way they go to work. At the end of the canal they have built a double Glacis, or ſloping bank of free-ſtone, which, uniting at the point, extends itſelf on both ſides up to the ſurface of the water. When the barque is in the lower channel, they hoiſt it up by the help of ſeveral capſtans to the plane of the firſt Glacis, ſo far, till, being raiſed to the point, it falls back again by its own weight along the ſecond Glacis, into the water of the upper channel, where it ſkuds away during a pretty while, like an arrow out of a bow; and they make it deſcend after the ſame manner proportionably. I cannot imagine how theſe barques, being commonly very long and heavy laden, eſcape being ſplit in the middle, when they are poiſed in the air upon this acute angle; for, conſidering that length, the lever muſt needs make a ſtrange effect upon it; yet do I not hear of any ill accident happen thereupon. I have paſs'd a pretty many times that way, and all the caution they take, when they have no mind to go aſhore, is, to tie themſelves faſt to ſome cable for fear of being toſs'd from prow to poop.

We meet with no ſuch ſluices in the grand canal, becauſe the emperor's barques, that are as large as our frigots, could not be raiſed by force of arm, nay, and would infallibly be ſplit in the fall; all the difficulty conſiſts in ſurmounting theſe torrents, of which I have ſpoken; yet this is what they perform ſucceſsfully, tho' not without ſome trouble and expence.

Theſe water-paſſages, as they call them, are neceſſary for the tranſportation of grain and ſtuffs, which they fetch from the ſouthern provinces to Pekin. There are, if we may give credit to the Chineſe, a thouſand barques, from eighty to an hundred tun, that make a voyage once a year, all of them freighted for the emperor, without counting thoſe of particular perſons, whoſe number is infinite. When theſe prodigious fleets ſet out, one would think they carry the tribute of all the kingdoms of the Eaſt, and that one of thoſe voyages alone was capable of ſupplying all Tartary wherewithal to ſubſiſt for ſeveral years: yet for all that, Pekin alone hath the benefit of it; and it would be as good as nothing, did not the province contribute beſides to the maintenance of the inhabitants of that vaſt city.

The Chineſe are not only content to make channels for the convenience of travellers, but they do alſo dig many others to catch the rainwater, wherewith they water the fields in time of drought, more eſpecially in the northern provinces. During the whole ſummer, you may ſee your country people buſied in raiſing this water into abundance of ſmall ditches, which they contrive acroſs the field. In other places they contrive great reſervatories of turf, whoſe bottom is raiſed above the level of the ground about it, to ſerve them in caſe of neceſſity. Beſides, they have every where in Xenſi and Xanſi, for want of rain, certain pits from twenty to an hundred feet deep, from which they draw water by an incredible toil. Now, if by chance they meet with a ſpring of water, it is worth obſerving how cunningly they huſband it; they ſuſtain it by banks in the higheſt places; they turn it here and there an hundred different ways, that all the country may reap the benefit of it; they divide it, by drawit by degrees, according as every one hath occaſion for it, inſomuch that a ſmall rivulet, well managed, does ſometimes produce the fertility of a whole province.

The rivers of China are no leſs conſiderable than its canals; there are two eſpecially, which the relations have made famous. The firſt is called Kiam or Yamçe, which they commonly tranſlate the Son of the Sea: But I am afraid they are miſtaken; for the letter, with which the Chineſe write Yam, is different from that which ſignifies the Sea, altho' the ſound and pronunciation may have ſome affinity: amongſt ſeveral ſignifications that this letter may have, that which they gave it in former times makes for our purpoſe. Under the reign of the emperor Yon, it ſignified a province of China, limited by this river on the north; and it is ſomewhat probable, that they gave this ſame name to the river, becauſe the prince drain'd all the water that overflow'd the whole country into it.

This flood takes its riſe in the province of Yunnan, croſſes the provinces of Suchven, Huquam, and Nankim; and after it hath watered four kingdoms, far and wide for 400 leagues together, it diſimbogues into the eaſt ſea, overagainſt the iſle of Cummim, which was made by the ſand and mud which this river bears along with it; the Chineſe have a proverb amongſt them, that ſays, "The Sea hath no bounds, and the Kiam no "bottom. †" And, in truth, in ſome places there is none to be found; in others, they pretend there is two or three hundred fathom water. I am nevertheleſs perſuaded, that their pilots, that carry not above fifty or ſixty fathom cord at longeſt, never had the curioſity to ſound ſo deep as three hundred fathom; and the impoſſibility of finding the bottom, with their ordinary plummet, is ſufficient, in my opinion, to incline them to ſuch like hyperbole's.

I have many times ſailed upon this river; I have moreover diligently obſerved its courſe and breadth from Nankim, to the mouth of another river, into which men enter to purſue their way to Canton. It is off of Nankim thirty leagues from the ſea, a little half league broad; the paſſage along it is dangerous, and becomes more and more infamous every day for its ſhipwrecks. In its courſe, which is exceeding rapid, it forms a great number of iſles, all of them very beneficial to the province, by reaſon of that multitude of bulruſhes ten or twelve foot high, that it produceth, ſerving for fuel to all the cities thereabouts; for they have ſcarce wood enough for buildings and ſhips. They yield a great revenue, and the emperor draws conſiderable duties from them.

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† *Haï vou pim: Kiam vou ti.*

The rivers, which the torrents of the mountains do ſometimes ſwell extraordinarily, grow ſo rapid, that many times they bear away the iſles with them, or leſſen them by the half, and form other new ones in ſome other place; and one cannot but admire to ſee them change place in ſuch a ſhort time, juſt as if by diving they had paſs'd under water from one place to another. Theſe great alterations do not always happen; but there is obſerved ſuch conſiderable change every year, that the Mandarines, leſt they ſhould be miſtaken, get them to be meaſured every three years, to augment or diminiſh the impoſts or duties, according to the condition they are found to be in.

The ſecond river of China is called Hoambo, as much as to ſay, the Yellow River, becauſe the earth it ſweeps away with it, eſpecially in times of great rains, gives it that colour. I have ſeen a great many others, whoſe waters, at certain ſeaſons of the year, are ſo over charged with ſlime, and ſo groſs and thick, that they rather reſemble torrents of mud than real rivers. The Hoambo takes its ſource at the extremity of the mountains that bound the province of Suchven in the weſt: from thence it throws itſelf into Tartary, where it flows for ſome time all along the great wall, at which it re-enters China, between the provinces of Xanſi and Xenſi.

After that it waters the province of Honan, and when it hath run croſs one part of the province of Nankim, and flowed above 600 leagues into the land, it diſimbogues at length into the eaſt ſea, not far from the mouth of Kiam. I have croſs'd it, and coaſted it in divers places; it is every where very broad and rapid, yet neither deep nor navigable to ſpeak of.

This river hath in former times cauſed great deſolation in China, and they are ſtill forced, to this very day, to keep up the waters in certain places by long and ſtrong banks, which notwithſtanding does not exempt the cities thereabouts from apprehenſions of inundation. So likewiſe have they been careful in the province of Honan, the ground lying very low thereabouts, to ſurround the greateſt part of the cities, about a mile from the walls, with a terraſs, caſed with turf, to prevent being ſurpris'd by accidents and caſualties in caſe the bank be broken, as happened about fifty-two years ago. For the emperor, endeavouring to force a rebel (who, for a long time laid cloſe ſiege to the city of Honan) to draw off, cauſed one part of the banks to be broken down, thereby to drown the adverſe army. But the relief, he afforded the city, proved more fatal than the fury of the beſiegers would have been; the whole province almoſt was laid under water, together with many cities and abundance of villages, above three hundred thouſand perſons drowned in the metropolis, amongſt whom were ſome of our miſſionaries, who at that time had a numerous flock of chriſtians, and thereby loſt their church and their lives.

The low country ever ſince is become a kind of a marſh or lake; not but that they have ſome deſign to repair this loſs, but the undertaking is difficult and very expenſive. The ſovereign court, that takes care of publick works, importuned the emperor more than once to ſend father Verbieſt thither, and peradventure

venture, that prince would have conſented thereto at laſt, but he diſcovered that the Mandarines made uſe of this pretence, to remove the father at a diſtance from court, and that their deſign was to engage him in a difficult enterprize, that was enough to deſtroy him; or out of which he could never have diſintangled himſelf with any honour.

There is to be ſeen in China abundance of other rivers leſs famous, but yet more commodious for commerce and trade.

Since they afford nothing uncommon, it would be to abuſe your patience, ſir, to deſcend to the particulars. As to what concerns fountains, it were to be wiſh'd there were more of them, and better. 'Tis certain that their uſual waters are not good, which, perhaps, hath obliged the inhabitants, eſpecially in the ſouthern provinces, to drink it always warm; but becauſe warm water is unpalatable and nauſeous, they bethought themſelves of putting ſome leaves of a tree to it, to give it a guſto. Thoſe of tea ſeemed to be the beſt, and ſo they frequently make uſe of it.

It may be alſo, that God Almighty, whoſe providence hath ſo univerſally provided for the wants of his people, and, if I may be bold to ſay it, for their delight and pleaſure, would not deprive China of that which is neceſſary to life; ſo that for to ſupply the defect of wells and fountains, which the nature of the ground hath made every where ſalt and brackiſh, he hath been pleaſed to produce that ſpecies of a particular tree in abundance, whoſe leaves ſerve not only to purge the waters from their noxious qualities, but alſo to make them wholſome and pleaſant.

We are aſſured that there are to be found in China, amongſt fountains, ſeveral that flow and ebb as regularly as the ſea doth; whether it be that they have ſome communication with the ocean by certain ſubterraneous conveyances and conduits, or whether it be in paſſing through certain earths, they are impregnated with ſalts and ſpirits apt to cauſe this fermentation, I leave others to determine.

Since I have begun to ſpeak of the different waters of China, I cannot paſs over in ſilence the lakes and ponds that are every where almoſt to be ſeen in all the provinces. Thoſe, that are produced in winter by the torrents from the mountains, lay waſte the fields, and render the whole country during ſummer barren, ſandy, and full of flints. Thoſe, that ariſe from ſprings, abound in fiſh, and yield a conſiderable revenue to the emperor by the ſalt they afford. There is one of them amongſt the reſt, if I be not miſtaken it is in Xanſi, in the middle whereof appears a ſmall iſland, where people divert themſelves, during the exceſſive heat, cooling themſelves, by throwing water into the air and making artificial rain. They find here a cruſt of a certain ſalt very white, and of a pleaſant ſcent, which they continue all the ſummer long, with that ſucceſs, that the ſalt would be ſufficient for the whole province, if it were as ſalt as that of the ſea; they commonly make uſe of it to ſeaſon meat withal.

Altho' I have not ſeen all thoſe famous lakes in China, whereunto hiſtorians aſcribe ſo many miracles, yet ſhall I relate ſomething which I do not care to warrant for goſpel; which,nevertheleſs, will let you underſtand the genius of the country, where people ſo eaſily give credit to what ſeems moſt incredible.

In the province of Fokien there is one whoſe water is green, and changes iron into copper. They have built a palace upon the banks of another not far diſtant from the former, in an apartment of which one hears the ringing of bells every time Heaven threatens a ſtorm. There are waters in the province of Quamtum that change colour every year. In ſummer and in winter they are very clear; in autumn they turn blue, but of ſuch a fine blue, that people make uſe of it to dye ſtuffs.

In that place is to be ſeen a mountain full of caverns, whoſe very aſpect is very terrible, in which is found a lake of that nature, that, if one throw a ſtone into it, one may hear a noiſe like thunder; ſometime after there ariſeth a groſs miſt, which immediately diſſolves into water.

But the moſt famous of them all is, that of the province of Yunnan. The Chineſe would make you believe that this lake came all on the ſudden, during an earthquake that ſwallowed up all the country with its inhabitants. This was a juſt judgment upon them for their wickedneſs, for they were very diſſolute livers. Of all that were there at that time, there was but one child that was ſaved, which they found in the middle of the lake borne up upon a piece of wood.

In the iſle of Haynan, belonging to China, there is a ſort of water, whether it be lake or fountain, I know not, that petrifies fiſh. I myſelf have brought over crawfiſh, that, preſerving their intire natural figure, are ſo far changed into ſtone, that the claws and body of them are very hard, very ſolid, and little differing from ſtone. Theſe wonders of nature are not ſo far particular to China, but the like may be met with elſewhere; and if one does not credit all the Chineſe relate, it is not becauſe there is ſometimes no foundation for their ſtories; but becauſe they have ſomewhat of the air of fable and hyperbolical in them, that would make a man even ſuſpect the truth itſelf.

I wiſh, with all my heart, ſir, I were able to explain all the kinds of fiſh that the rivers and lakes furniſh them with, as well as thoſe that are caught upon their coaſts (ſo that I might fully ſatisfy the ſubject I have undertaken) but to tell you the truth, I am not well enough informed to engage myſelf upon a particular relation of them; I have ſeen, as far as I can gueſs, all the fiſh in China, that we have in France: I have taken notice of a great many others that I did not know, not ſo much as their names, that is all I can ſay of it: beſides that I ſhall confirm to you, what poſſibly you may have read in the relations touching the fiſh they call the golden and ſilver fiſh, that are found in divers provinces, which are a great beauty and ornament to the courts and gardens of great perſons.

They are commonly of a finger's length, and of a proportionable thickneſs; the male is of a moſt delicate red, from the head to the middle of the body, and further; the reſt, together with the tail, is gilded, but with ſuch a glittering and burniſh'd gold, that our real gildings cannot come near it. The female is white, its tail, nay and one part of its body, perfectly waſh'd over with ſilver; the tail of both of them is not even and flat as that of other fiſh, but faſhioned like a noſegay, thick and long, which gives a particular grace to this pretty animal, and ſets it off, being beſides perfectly well proportioned.

Thoſe, who would breed them, ought to have great care, for they are extraordinary tender, and ſenſible of the leaſt injuries of the air. They put them into a great baſon, ſuch as are in gardens, very deep and large, at the bottom of which they are wont to place an earthen pot turned upſide down, full of holes on the ſides, that they may retire into it when it is very hot weather, and by that means ſhelter themſelves from the ſun. They likewiſe throw upon the ſurface of the water ſome particular herbs that keep always green, and maintain the coolneſs. This water is to be changed two or three times a week, yet ſo that freſh water may be put in, according as the baſon is emptied, which muſt never be left dry. If one be obliged to remove the fiſh from one vaſe to another, great care muſt be taken not to touch them with the hand; all thoſe that are touched die quickly after, or ſhrivel up; you muſt for that purpoſe make uſe of a little thread purſe, faſtened at the upper end of a hoop, into which they are inſenſibly engaged; when they are once got into it of themſelves, one muſt take heed of hurting them, and be ſure to hold them ſtill in the firſt, which empties but ſlowly, and gives time to tranſport them to the other water. Any great noiſe, as of a cannon, or of thunder, too ſtrong a ſmell, too violent a motion, are all very hurtful to them; yea, and ſometimes occaſion their dying; as I have obſerved at ſea every time they diſcharged the cannon, or melted pitch and tar: beſides, they live almoſt upon nothing; thoſe inſenſible worms that are bred in the water, or thoſe ſmall earthly particles that are mix'd with it, ſuffice in a manner to keep them alive. They do, notwithſtanding, throw in little balls of paſte now and then, but there is nothing better than a wafer, which ſteep'd makes a kind of pap, of which they are extremely greedy, which indeed is very ſuitable to their natural delicacy and tenderneſs. In hot countries they multiply very much, provided care be taken to remove their eggs, which ſwim upon the water, which the fiſh moſt commonly eat: They place them in a particular vaſe expoſed to the ſun, and there they preſerve them till the heat hatcheth them; the fiſh come out of a black colour, which ſome of them keep ever after, but it is changed by little and little in other colours, into red, white, gold, and ſilver, according to their different kind: the gold and ſilver begins at the extremity of the tail, and expand themſelves ſomewhat more or leſs, according to their particular diſpoſition.

All this, ſir, and other marvels of the univerſe, makes us acknowledge the finger of God every where, who for our ſakes hath embelliſhed the world many thouſand ways. He is not only content to enlighten the heavens, and enrich the earth, but deſcends into the abyſſes, into the very waters, where he hath left ſome footſteps of his profound wiſdom; and not to mention thoſe prodigious monſters, that ſeem to be made to aſtoniſh nature, he hath likewiſe created thoſe wonderful fiſh I but now deſcribed, which, as little as they are, yet by their ſingular beauty are the ſubject of our admiration, and furniſh us with ſome faint ideas of the greatneſs of the wiſe Creator.

Thus I have preſented you, ſir, in a compendium, the draught, and as it were the map of that country, which I deſign'd to give you ſome knowledge of; theſe are but the outſide, and, if I may ſo ſay, but the body of that empire, whoſe ſoul and ſpirit is diſpers'd thro' its inhabitants. Peradventure, when you ſhall have read what I have writ to you about it, you will be apt to inquire what people they be who are ſo happy as to receive the greateſt, faireſt, and moſt fertile portion of the earth for their inheritance; ſuch a land, in a word, that it wants nothing to make it a real Land of Promiſe, but to be cultivated by God's people, and inhabited by true Iſraelites indeed. If we had nothing, as the Hebrews had, but the red-ſea and wilderneſs to go through, probably forty years might ſuffice to bring it under ſubjection to the goſpel: but that vaſt extent of ſeas, thoſe infinite and unpracticable land journies, that were capable of putting a ſtop to Moſes and the prophets, are a great ſtop to the zeal of the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, and leſſen the number of his new apoſtles.

Oh! that I could, as the Hebrews did, whom Moſes ſent to diſcover the Promiſed Land, repreſent the immenſe richneſs, and moſt precious harveſt that China promiſes to the labourers in the vineyards, we have hopes that probably the proſpect of ſuch an abundant crop might in time prevail with all Europe to come and reap it; at leaſt, I hope that my teſtimony will not be inſignificant, and that the more than ordinary zeal of the ſmall company of miſſionaries, that ſhall ſucceed me, will make amends for the vaſt number of thoſe which ſuch a vaſt empire might demand. I am, with all the reſpect imaginable,

SIR,
Your moſt humble,
and moſt affectionate Servant,
L. J.

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LETTER V.

To the Marquis de Torſi, *Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.*

Of the peculiar Character of the Chineſe *Nation, its Antiquity, Nobility, Manners, and its good and bad Qualities.*

My Lord,

SEeing in the employment wherewith the king hath honoured you, and which you do already diſcharge with ſo much wiſdom, nothing can contribute more to promote you to that high pitch of perfection, that all Europe expects from you, than the exact knowledge of the manners and genius of foreigners, I could imagine no leſs than that, by ordering me to write to you concerning the empire of China, you did particularly deſire to learn what was the character of its inhabitants.

It is true, if we judge of the future by preceding reigns, ſuch informations would perhaps ſtand you in no ſtead. Hitherto France hath had nothing to do with that people, and nature ſeems to have placed them at ſuch a diſtance from us, on purpoſe that we might have no concern with them. But under the reign of Lewis the Great, for whom nature herſelf hath ſo often changed her laws, is any thing impoſſible? Nay, will not Heaven, which ſeems to have employed all nations to make him renowned, oblige China, as proud and haughty as it is, to contribute ſomething to his glory?

It is in all human probability, under your miniſtry, my lord, that we ſhall behold the moſt flouriſhing and mighty empire of the Weſt, unite itſelf with the moſt puiſſant realm in all Europe. And perhaps, if it had not been for this fatal war, the dire conſequences of which have expanded themſelves as far as the extremities of the univerſe, you would e're this have given audience to the envoys of a prince, who never acknowledged any other ſovereign beſides himſelf in the world. This negotiation, ſo glorious for you, and ſo much conducing to the eſtabliſhment of religion, which the iniquity of the times hath hitherto interrupted, may be hereafter ſet afoot again; and it is on purpoſe to diſpoſe and incline you to the ſame, that I preſume to take the liberty, my lord, to let you underſtand the character of thoſe who are to be employed therein.

The Chineſe are ſo ancient in the world, that it fares with them as to their original, as with great rivers whoſe ſource can ſcarce be diſcovered. It is neceſſary for that purpoſe, to look back farther than all our prophane hiſtories, for their chronology ſurpaſſes even the common account of the creation of the world.

It is very true, the vulgar hiſtory of that grand monarchy is not only dubious, but manifeſtly falſe, for it computes forty thouſand years ſince the foundation of the empire; but the account, given by the learned and judicious among them, comes ſo well confirmed, ſo evidently proved, and eſtabliſhed by ſo conſtant a tradition, that one cannot call it in queſtion among them, without paſſing for ridiculous, and as they themſelves expreſs it, for heretical.

According to this hiſtory, which none of their learned men ever queſtioned, China hath had its kings for above four thouſand years, that have continued to this preſent time without any interruption. The ſame family hath not been always ſeated upon the throne; there have been twenty-two different families, that have produced two hundred and thirty ſix emperors. Several doctors carry this monarchy back ſix hundred years higher; their opinion depends on probable grounds, but we may relie upon the firſt; which makes very much for the grandeur and nobility of China, ſince five or ſix hundred years, more or leſs, does not produce any notable diminution in its antiquity.

Certainly, after all the inquiries and examinations that have been made into this chronology, it is no longer left to our liberty to doubt of it, than of the hiſtories that are the moſt authentickly received amongſt us: and it ought ſo much the rather to be believed, foraſmuch as it was incapable of admitting any alteration from foreigners; foraſmuch as it was always current amongſt the knowing men of the country, for true, ſure, and unconteſtable, becauſe it is written in a natural, plain, unaffected ſtile, that carries with it that air of verity that ever perſuades: and beſides, Confucius, eſteemed for his great capacity, ſincerity and uprightneſs, never doubted of it; nay, and did even eſtabliſh his whole doctrine thereupon, five hundred and fifty years before the birth of our Saviour, becauſe his books are very conformable to the holy ſcripture, in reference to the age of the firſt men; for they aſſure us that Tohi reigned an hundred and fifty years; Chinnum, an hundred and forty; Hoamti, an hundred and eleven; Yao, an hundred and eighteen; and ſo for the reſt, always decreaſing, conformable to what holy writ teaches us. In a word, the eclipſes, obſerved at that time, muſt needs happen in effect, which they could not know, but by obſervation, and not by any calculations, ſince they never had exact ones: All this perſuades us that there is little certainty in the prophane hiſtory of the world, if we can reaſonably doubt of that of China.

In a word, this empire was involved in the common fate of all others, whoſe origin is very inconſiderable. It ſeems probable that the children, or grand-children, of Noah diſpers'd themſelves into Aſia, and at length penetrated as far as this part of China, that is moſt weſterly, which is called at this day Xanſi and Xenſi. They lived at the beginning in families, and the kings were fathers, to whom a long continuance of years, abundance of flocks, and other country paſtoral riches added ſome authority.

Fohi was the firſt that laid the foundation of the monarchy; his wiſdom, diſcretion, his good morals, power, and reputation, which his great age had acquired him, made them give ear to him, as to an oracle: he regulated all private, as well as politick and religious matters, inſomuch that the ſtate was in a very flouriſhing condition in a ſhort time; his ſubjects poſſeſſed the province of Honan at firſt, and ſome years after all the lands and territories that are extended as far as the ſouth ſea.

It is probable that the Chineſe, from their very original, did look upon themſelves as ſomething more than other men, like to thoſe princes, who, as ſoon as they are born, diſcover a certain natural loftineſs that ever diſtinguiſhes them from the vulgar. Whether it was that the neighbouring kingdoms were barbarous, or inferior to them in point of wiſdom, I don't know; but at that very time they laid down a maxim of ſtate amongſt themſelves, *To have no commerce with foreigners and ſtrangers, but juſt ſo much as ſhould be neceſſary to receive their homage.* Neither did they court and ſeek after theſe badges of ſovereignty out of a ſpirit of ambition, but that they might have the better opportunity to preſcribe to other people of the world laws and conſtitutions of perfect government.

So that when any one amongſt their tributaries failed to appear at the time appointed, they did not oblige him by open force to ſubmit, but on the contrary had compaſſion on him. *What do we loſe by it*, ſay they, *if he ſtill remain barbarous? Since he is ſo averſe as wiſdom, he needs to blame no body but himſelf as often to he ſhall fail in his duty thro' paſſion or blindneſs.*

This grave policy acquired the Chineſe ſo great a reputation, that throughout all the Indies, all Tartary and Perſia, look'd upon them as the oracles of the world; yea, and the people of Japan had ſuch an high conceit of them, that when St. Xavier brought the faith amongſt them (altho' China at that time came ſhort of her priſtine probity) one of the great reaſons, they objected againſt the good man, was, that a nation ſo wiſe, ſo intelligent, had not yet embraced it.

But this piece of policy that induced them to diſtinguiſh themſelves from others, which at firſt might probably be a profitable maxim, degenerated afterwards into pride. They look'd upon themſelves as a choſen elect people, that Heaven had produced in the center of the univerſe to give them a law; a people only capable to inſtruct, civilize, and govern nations. They fancied other men but as dwarfs and pitiful monſters, thrown by into the extremities of the earth, as the droſs and off-ſcouring of nature; whereas the Chineſe, placed in the middle of the world, had alone received from God Almighty a rational form and ſhape, and a true ſize. Their ancient maps are filled with ſuch like figures, and with a great many emblems apt to inſpire that diſdain they ſhewed of all mankind.

But perceiving the Europeans inſtructed in all ſorts of ſciences, they were ſtruck with aſtoniſhment. *How can it poſſibly be*, ſaid they, *that a people ſo far remote from us ſhould have any wit or capacity? They have never peruſed our books; they were never modell'd by our laws, and yet they ſpeak, diſcourſe, and argue aright as we do.*

Our workmanſhip, as ſtuffs, clocks, watches, mathematical inſtruments, and ſuch like curioſities, ſurpriſed them ſtill more; for they imagined, that dextrous and expert artificers were no where to be met with but in China. Then they began to underſtand, that we were not ſo barbarous as they imagined; and ſaid in a joking way, *We ſuppoſed all other people blind, and that nature had beſtowed eyes upon none but the Chineſe.*; *but we find now, that this is not univerſally true, if the Europeans do not ſee ſo clearly as we, they have at leaſt one eye apiece.*

I have taken notice of ſome Frenchmen ſo moved at this ridiculous vanity, that they were not maſters of their paſſion; they would poſſibly have done better to have laugh'd at this vanity, or at leaſt have excus'd it, ſince the Chineſe, till that time, had ſeen none but Indians and Tartars, and they beheld the Weſt at a diſtance, as we at preſent behold the Terra Auſtralis Incognita, and foreſts of Canada: Now, if at 300 leagues diſtance from Quebec we found Iroquian mathematicians, or learned Alkonkins, that could diſcover to us a new philoſophy, more clear, comprehenſive, and more perfect than ours, we ſhould be no leſs blame-worthy than the Chineſe, for preferring ourſelves to that people, and for having hitherto termed them Barbarians.

Abating this pride, you muſt confeſs that the Chineſe nation hath been endued with rare qualities; with a great deal of politeneſs in managing the affairs of the world, with great ſenſe and regularity in their buſineſs, with much zeal for the publick good, true and juſt ideas of government, with a genius, mean indeed as to ſpeculative ſciences, but yet right and ſure in morality, which they have always preſerved very conformable to reaſon.

The people principally applied themſelves to the education of children in their families; they eſteemed agriculture above all other things; they were laborious to exceſs, loving and underſtanding commerce and trading perfectly well. Judges and governors of cities affected an outſide gravity, ſobriety at their tables, moderation in houſe-keeping, and equity in all their judgments, which gained love and reſpect from all the people in general. The emperor placed his happineſs in nothing more than to procure it for his ſubjects; and looked upon himſelf not ſo much a king of a mighty ſtate, as a father of a numerous family.

This character of China, my lord, that I have given you, is not flattering, but faithfully deduced from its own hiſtory, that furniſhes us with an infinite number of examples of the conſpicuous wiſdom that hath been ſo long the ſoul that actuates its government. 'Tis true indeed, the civil wars, the weak, or wicked kings, and the power of foreigners, have from time to time diſturbed this goodly order: whether the fundamental laws of the ſtate were excellent, or the people from their cradles endued with happy diſpoſitions, is not material; but it is moſt certain, theſe fatal and troubleſome intervals did not long continue; if ſo be they were but never ſo little left to their own diſpoſal, they flowed again in their former courſe; and we ſee at this very day, in the midſt of that corruption, which the domeſtick troubles and commerce with the Tartars have introduced, ſome footſteps of their ancient probity remaining.

I do not pretend, my lord, to enlarge any further upon this ſubject. I know very well that it is a letter that I have the honour to write to you, and not a hiſtory; beſides, they are about tranſlating into French that hiſtory which the Chineſe themſelves have given us; and I am confident it will pleaſe, not only by its novelty, but by the extraordinary matters it contains.

I thought it enough in this place to draw you out the portraiture of the preſent ſtate of China, in relation to the manners and cuſtoms of its people; I could decypher it in a few words, by telling you that they live there as we do in Europe. Avarice, ambition, and pleaſure go a great way in all their tranſactions. They cozen and cheat in traffick; injuſtice reigns in ſovereign courts; intrigues buſy both princes and courtiers. In the mean time, perſons of quality take ſo many meaſures to conceal vice, and the out-works are ſo well guarded, that if a ſtranger be not careful to be inſtructed concerning affairs, to the bottom, he imagines that every thing is perfectly well regulated. Herein the Chineſe reſemble the Europeans, in other reſpects they are wholly unlike. Their countenance, air, language, diſpoſition, civilities, manners, and behaviour are not only different from ours, but alſo from all that we can find in all other nations of the world.

Without doubt, my lord, you have taken notice of the figures that are painted upon the porcelain diſhes and cabinets that come from China;

our pictures in Europe do always flatter us, but thoſe of China make them maimed and ridiculous. They are not ſo ill-favoured as they make themſelves: they do not indeed entertain the ſame ideas of beauty which we do. They would have a man big, tall, and groſs; they would have him have a broad forehead, eyes little and flat, a ſhort noſe, great ears, a mouth of a middle ſize, a long beard, and black hair. That curious feature, that lively aſpect, that ſtately and noble gate and deportment the French ſo much eſteem, does not at all pleaſe them. He is a handſome man that fills an elbow chair, that by his ſize and bulk can look big. As for their colour, they are naturally as fair as we, eſpecially towards the North; but being the men take no care of themſelves, travel much, wear upon their head nothing but a little bonnet, very improper to defend their face from the ſun-beams, they are commonly as tawny as the Portugueſe in the Indies: the people alſo of the provinces of Quamtum and Yunnan, by reaſon of the exceſſive heat, and working half naked, are of a dun complexion.

As much as the men neglect themſelves in this particular, ſo much do the women take all the care imaginable to preſerve themſelves. I am not ſure if painting be uſual with them; but I have been told that they rub their faces every morning with a ſort of white meal, which rather ſpoils than mends their complexion. They have all of them little eyes, and ſhort noſes; in other things they come nothing ſhort of the European ladies, but their modeſty, ſo natural to them, doth infinitely ſet off their handſomeneſs; a little collar of white ſattin, faſtened to a veſt, keeps them light, and covers their neck all over. Their hands are always hid in long ſleeves; they tread ſoftly and gingerly, with their eyes upon the ground, their head on one ſide; and a man would imagine, to look on them, that they were a company of nuns or devotees by profeſſion, ſet apart and ſequeſter'd from the world, only taken up in the ſervice of God. So that it is obſervable, that cuſtom hath many times more power to perplex and trouble the fair ſex, than the moſt auſtere and rigid virtue: nay, and it were a thing to be deſired, that chriſtianity were able to obtain from chriſtian ladies here, what the practice of the world hath for ſo many ages inſpired into the idolatrous Chineſe.

This modeſty, nevertheleſs, does not hinder them from that vanity incident to their ſex; the more they are confined, the leſs they love ſolitude; they dreſs themſelves gorgeouſly, and ſpend all the morning in making themſelves fine, thinking they may be ſeen in the day-time, altho', perhaps, they are not by any one, but their own domeſticks. Their head-dreſs, which uſually conſiſts of ſeveral locks buckled up, interlaced with flowers of gold and ſilver, makes but an odd kind of a figure. But I neither can, nor will, my lord, give you a particular deſcription of it, becauſe, I know you do not expect it from me. However, I am perſuaded, if people ſhould ſee the model of them in France, they would go near to be tempted to quit that extravagant burden of head-cloaths which they wear, and dreſs themſelves after the neatneſs and ſimplicity of the Chineſe.

The ladies wear, as men do, a long ſattin or cloth of gold veſt, red, blue, or green, according to their particular fancy; the elder ſort habit themſelves in black or purple; they wear, beſides that, a kind of ſurtout, the ſleeves whereof are extremely wide, and trail upon the ground, when they have no occaſion to hold them up. But that which diſtinguiſheth them from all the women in the world, and does in a manner make a partciular ſpecies of them, is, the littleneſs of their feet, and here lies the more eſſential point of their beauty. This is one of the moſt wonderful and ſtrange things in the world: They affect this to that degree, that they would juſtly be accuſed of folly, did not an extravagant and ancient cuſtom (which, in the buſineſs of the mode, evermore prevails over the greateſt convenience) oblige them to follow the ſtream, and comply with the cuſtom of the country.

So ſoon as ever the girls are born, the nurſes take care to tie their feet extremely hard, that they may not grow: Nature, that ſeems to be diſpoſed for this torment, does more eaſily buckle to it than one could imagine; nay, one does not perceive that their health is impaired thereby. Their ſhoes of ſattin, embroidered with gold, ſilver, and ſilk, are extraordinary neat; and tho' they be very little, yet they ſtrive to ſhew them as they walk; for walk they do (which one would not be apt to believe) and would walk all day long by their good will, if they had liberty to go abroad. Some have been perſuaded that it was an invention of the ancient Chineſe, who, to bring women under a neceſſity of keeping within doors, brought little feet in faſhion. I have more than once inquired about it of the Chineſe themſelves, but they never heard of any ſuch reaſon. *Theſe are idle tales*, ſays one of them, ſmiling, *our fore-fathers knew women too well, as we do, to believe, that, in retrenching half of their feet, they could be deprived of the power of walking, and of longing to ſee the world.*

If people would have given themſelves the trouble to have conſulted the relations concerning the aſpect and mien of the Chineſe women, ; it would not have been ſo eaſy a matter to impoſe upon the eaſineſs of the ladies of Paris, who entertained a poor Frenchwoman the laſt year, giving her all manner of relief, becauſe ſhe ſaid ſhe was an outlandiſh woman, and of one of the beſt families in China. This accident ſurpriſed all curious perſons, and the marquis de Croiſi told me, he would take it as a favour if I would examine the truth of the ſtory.

Charity, added he, is no leſs acceptable to God, altho' it be miſplaced upon objects that deſerve it not. If the buſineſs of giving the money were the only thing in queſtion, it would be ſcarce worth the while to detect the fraud where a perſon pretends neceſſity: but in the caſe before us, the maid ſaid ſhe was a heathen, that ſhe was exhorted long ſince to be converted; that ſhe underſtood rightly, or at leaſt pretended to underſtand our myſteries; in fine, ſhe deſired to embrace our religion; and they were juſt upon the point to baptize her. If ſhe be a Chineſe, well and good; we have cauſe to admire divine providence for bringing this ſoul from ſo remote a place, to be admitted into the boſom of the church; but if ſhe be a Frenchwoman, who, probably hath been baptiz'd from her infancy, this abuſe of the ſacrament that ſhe is going to receive a ſecond time, is a ſacrilege deſerving the ſevereſt puniſhment; of which ſacrilege thoſe that aſſiſt her become guilty themſelves.

I was already much prepoſſeſſed with an ill opinion of this pretended Chineſe; but, beſides the order of the marquis de Croiſi, I thought it would be good to ſift out the buſineſs to the bottom, to undeceive thoſe that were any ways concerned therein. When ſhe underſtood that I would come and ſee her, ſhe was very much diſturbed. *He is not a Chineſe father*, ſays ſhe, *but one of the Indian miſſionaries, whom the revolution of Siam hath brought back.* Nay, they had much ado to find her, when I appeared; they ſought for her all up and down a good while, and at length unkennell'd her, and perſuaded her to make her appearance.

So ſoon as I ſaw her, I had no need of examination; the features of her face, her gate, her feet, her whole behaviour betray'd her. She feign'd in ſpeaking French, that ſhe did not well underſtand the language; but, beſides that the placing of the words, which ſhe endeavoured to pronounce confuſedly, was altogether natural, which is ſcarce ever got by ſtrangers, ſhe did alſo pronounce, with a great deal of firmneſs, ſeveral letters not in uſe with the Chineſe, which it is impoſſible for them to expreſs.

After the firſt diſcourſes, I demanded of what province, and what family of China ſhe was, and by what ſtrange adventure ſhe was at ſuch a great diſtance from her country? *I am of Pekin itſelf*, ſays ſhe, *the metropolis of the empire, born in the emperor's palace, brought up at court, and daughter to prince Coronné:* A prince who does diſpoſe ſovereignly every thing; more maſter, and more powerful than the emperor himſelf; whoſe pleaſures are never interrupted by the cares of publick affairs; who, being little concerned at the good or bad condition of the empire, confines all his ambition to the rendering himſelf happy, and to lead an eaſy and pleaſant life.

I embarqued with my mother, who had a deſign to paſs into Japan, there to treat of a marriage for me. In the paſſage, our veſſel was attacked by a Holland pirate, that took it, and blew it up; and brought me away priſoner. However, the barbarous pirate took ſuch care of me, as did ſomething ſweeten my captivity, if the loſs of my mother had not reduced me to a diſconſolate condition, for ſhe died before my eyes; and the repreſentation of ſo fatal an accident, that lay night and day heavy upon my ſpirit, would ſcarce permit me to reflect upon the many kind offices he did me.

Nevertheleſs, my condition was not ſo deplorable as I imagined; the victorious Hollander was at length overcome by a French privateer: I was a ſecond time a captive, and treated by the new captain with ſo much harſhneſs, that I was at that very moment apprehenſive that my grief might increaſe, and that the exceſs of miſeries, that one endures in this world, is never ſo great but one may become ſtill more miſerable. This voyage was to me the longeſt, moſt dangerous, and accompanied with much ſorrow and bitterneſs. At length we came aſhore at a place which I knew not; they brought me out of the ſhip, and, after they had dragged me through ſeveral provinces, they barbarouſly forſook me, and I found myſelf deſtitute, comfortleſs, and without any ſupport, in the middle of this great city, which I hear called Paris.

'Tis true, Heaven hath not quite forſaken me; the word Pekin, *the only word by which I could make known my country, brought me out of miſery. Some ladies, at the hearing of this word, were moved with compaſſion, took me into their houſe, and have ever ſince treated me with ſo much charity, that I do not know if I ought to complain of fate that hath conducted me into ſo good hands.*

She had indeed, ſome cauſe to be well pleaſed with her lot, much better in effect, than ſhe could reaſonably expect. They treated her as a maid of ſome noble family; nay, it was an hundred pound to a penny but they had given her the quality of princeſs Coronné, a name much better known in France than China, where this is yet unknown. They told me moreover that divers perſons were impatient to do her a kindneſs, and that Monſieur N. one of our moſt famous writers, had already compoſed three extraordinary eloquent letters in her name; one for the emperor, another for prince Coronné, and the third for ſome other prince of her family. He hath, without doubt, what he deſerved from the perſons that ingaged him in it; yet I do not believe that China will ever thank him for it.

For my part, my lord, I do confeſs that the bare recital of this adventure appeared to me ſomewhat fabulous, and carries with it an air romantick enough to undeceive thoſe, whom an exceſs of charity had not quite blinded. Prince Coronné is a chimera, that hath not the leaſt appearance of truth in it. The birth of a maid in a palace, where there is none but eunuchs, is ſtill more hard to be believed. The Hollanders are not at war with the Chineſe, and it is not their beſt way to fall out with them, by aſſaulting their ſhips.

The Chineſe dames, that ſcarce ever ſtir out of their houſes, do not care for undertaking long voyages at ſea: and the match they were going to manage is no more likely than that a princeſs of France ſhould embark at Breſt, to ſail into the Indies to eſpouſe ſome Mandarine of Siam.

Beſides, we know all the veſſels that we have taken from the Hollanders, as well as thoſe that are arrived in France from the Indies: we know the captains of them, we know their prizes, their engagements, their adventures, and yet we hear not one word of what our Chineſe relates. Now, if ſhe be ſo unfortunate as to be found in the ſtreets of Paris miſerable, forlorn, and unknown, ſhe ought not ſo much to lay the fault upon our French people, as upon her ill fortune that took no care to place her better in this world.

But to convince all thoſe who were preſent at our interview, I put divers queſtions to her about the principal cities in China; I examined her concerning the money, their writing, the characters and language of the country. She told me ſhe had often travelled from Pekin to Nankim in leſs than three days, notwithſtanding it is above three hundred leagues from one to another; that they uſed gold money, altho' gold is no where current through all the empire but as precious ſtones are in Europe; that the ſilver coin was ſtamp'd as ours is, round, flat, bearing the emperor's arms, with divers figures according to the cuſtom of eaſtern nations, notwithſtanding the ſilver hath no regular figure, they caſt it into ingots, they reduce it to what form they pleaſe without arms, order, or ornament, they clip it into great pieces, as occaſion ſerves; and it is only by weight, not by the emperor's mark, that they know its value.

I writ down ſome Chineſe characters; for ſhe had boaſted that ſhe could read, a perſon of her quality durſt not ſay the contrary; but the misfortune was, ſhe miſtook herſelf, and took the paper at the wrong end, boldly reading the letters, turned upſide down, as if they had been right: upon the whole, that which ſhe pronounced had no manner of relation to the genuine ſenſe of the writing. At laſt I ſpoke Chineſe to her, and, for fear leſt ſhe might avoid the difficulty, I acquainted her that I ſpake the Mandarine language ſo current throughout the empire, which they conſtantly uſe at the court. She was ſo impudent as to frame *ex tempore* a wild ridiculous gibberiſh, but ſo little underſtood, that it was evident ſhe had not time enough to make it hang well together; ſo that, not being able to underſtand what I ſaid to her, I ſhould have been ſore put to it to explain what ſhe meant, if indeed ſhe did mean any thing.

After this trial and examination, ſhe might bluſh for ſhame, and ingenuouſly confeſs the impoſture; but ſhe ſtill keeps up her converſation without being concerned, and with ſuch an air of confidence, that would make any one judge that this China romance was not the firſt ſtory ſhe had made.

I thought, my lord, that you would be very glad to be acquainted with this; beſides that it may afford you ſome pleaſure, it will alſo ſerve to let you underſtand that the mind, countenance, and behaviour of the Chineſe women have no affinity with thoſe of the Europeans; and that a French woman muſt needs be brazen-fac'd, when under the borrowed name of a Chineſe ſhe pretends to impoſe upon perſons who have, as long as I have done, ſeen both nations.

After this little digreſſion you may be willing I ſhould take up my former diſcourſe again. The mens habits, as every where elſe, are there much different from the womens; they ſhave their heads all over, except behind, where they let as much hair grow as is needful to make a long treſs. They do not uſe a hat as we do, but wear continually a bonnet or a cap, which civility forbids putting off.

This bonnet differs according to the different ſeaſons of the year: that which they uſe in ſummer is in form of a cone, that is to ſay, round and wide below, but ſhort and ſtrait above, where it terminates in a mere point. It is lined within with a pretty ſattin, and the top covered with a very fine mat, very much eſteemed in the country. Beſides that, they add thereto a great flake of red ſilk, that falls round about, and reaches to the edges; ſo that, when they walk, this ſilk flows irregularly on all ſides, and the continual motion of the head gives it a particular pleaſing grace.

Sometimes in lieu of ſilk they wear a ſort of long hair, of a vivid ſhining red, which rain does not deface, and is more eſpecially in uſe amongſt men when they ride. This hair comes from the province of Suchven, and grows upon the legs of certain cows; its natural colour is white, but they give it a tincture, that makes it dearer than the fineſt ſilk. In winter they wear a pluſh cap, bordered with a ſable fox-ſkin; the reſt is of a curious ſattin, black or purple, covered with a great flake of red ſilk, like the ſummer cap. There is nothing more handſome than theſe caps, which are ſold ſometimes for eight or ten crowns; but they are ſo ſhallow, that they always diſcover the ears, which is mighty inconvenient in the ſun, or upon a journey. When the Mandarines are in their formalities, the upper part of the bonnet hath a diamond in the creſt, or ſome other precious ſtone ill cut, yet inchaſed in a button of very curious wrought gold: the others have a huge tuft, or button of ſtuff, agate, cryſtal, or ſome other matter.

Their habit is long and convenient enough for ſtudents, but cumberſome for men on horſeback: it conſiſts of a veſt that reaches to the ground, the skirts or ſides of which are folded before, one over the other, in ſuch a manner that the uppermoſt is extended to the left ſide, where they faſten it all along, with four or five gold or ſilver buttons. The ſleeves, that are wide towards the ſhoulder, grow ſtraiter and ſtraiter to the wriſt, like the ſleeves of a prieſt's albe, but they do in a manner cover the whole hand, and leave nothing to be ſeen but the fingers ends: they keep the veſt cloſe with a broad ſilken ſaſh, whoſe two ends hang down to the knees. The Tartars ſtick an handkerchief to it on both ſides, with a ſheath for a knife and fork, and toothpick, a purſe, and other pretty implements. In ſummer their neck is all bare, which looks very ill; in winter they cover it with a collar of ſattin faſtened to the veſt, or with a tippet of ſable or fox-ſkin, about three or four fingers broad, which is faſtened before with a button, which is very decent, and becomes horſemen wonderfully.

Beſides the veſt they put on a kind of ſurtout with ſhort wide ſleeves like thoſe of your barreſters gowns; the ſtudents wear them very long; the gentlemen, and eſpecially the Tartars, will have them ſhort; and thoſe they uſe reach no farther than their pocket-holes; as for their under garment they uſe in ſummer only a ſingle pair of drawers of white taffaty, under a very broad and ſhort ſhirt of the ſame ſtuff; but in winter the ſhirt is of linnen, and under it they have breeches of coarſe ſattin quilted with cotton, or raw ſilk, which is warmer.

All this is natural enough; but perhaps, my lord, you will be ſurpriſed to hear that the Chineſe are always booted; and when any one renders them a viſit, if they chance not to have their boots on, they make them wait till they go fetch them.

We ſtand in need of this example to authorize our ancient cuſtom, but we carried on the mode farther than they; for in our memory the French were not ſatisfied with walking booted along the ſtreets, but armed them with huge jingling ſpurs, that nothing might be wanting to the ornaments of a gentleman on horſeback; but we are recovered as to this point, and ſeveral others; but the Chineſe in all probability, that dote upon antiquity, will not be cured of it in haſte; it is indeed, in reſpect of them, an extravagant piece of foppery, not to dare to go into the city without their boots, becauſe they are always carried in a ſedan.

This mode would be ſtill the more pardonable in winter; for their boots being of ſilk, and their boot-hoſe of a pinked ſtuff, lined with cottons a good inch thick, the leg is thereby well defended againſt the cold; but in ſummer, where the heat is exceſſive, no body living beſides the Chineſe, to keep up an air of gravity, would endure to be at that rate in a kind of a ſtove from morning to evening: and what is more ſtrange, your people that work ſcarce ever uſe them, either by reaſon of the inconvenience, or to ſave charges.

The form of theſe boots is ſomewhat different from ours, for they have neither heel nor top; when they ride any long journey, they are made of firm, old leather, of thick, black, pinked cotton; but in the city they uſually wear them of ſattin, with a coarſe border of pluſh or velvet upon the knee. The people in publick, and perſons of quality within doors, are, inſtead of ſhoes, ſhod with pattins of black linnen, or ſome very pretty ſilk, very convenient; they ſtick cloſe to the foot of themſelves, by a border that covers the heel, without needing to tie them before.

They have not introduced the uſe of the muff and gloves into China; but, the ſleeves of the veſt being very long, they draw up their hands into them when it is cold to keep them warm. I know not if I may make bold, my lord, to add another cuſtom, which is very ancient among the Chineſe, and by no means ſuitable to the French politeneſs; their doctors, and other learned men, let their nails grow exceſſively, inſomuch that in ſome they are little ſhorter than their fingers; it obtains amongſt them not only for an ornament, but a diſtinction, by which it may be known, that by their condition they are ſeparated from mechanick arts, and are wholly addicted to ſciences. In ſhort, ſince they affect a ſtarched gravity in all their ways, which conciliates reſpect, they imagine with themſelves that a long beard might contribute thereto, ſo they ſuffer it to grow; now if they have not much, it is not for want of cultivating: but nature in this point has been very niggardly, there is not a man of them that does not envy the Europeans, whom they look upon in this reſpect as the greateſt men in the world.

Here you have, my lord, a particular deſcription, that may in ſome meaſure acquaint you with the deportment and aſpect of the Chineſe; *I do not think*, ſays a Spaniard to me one day, *that they ought to be offended at it in France; in all likelihood thoſe modes formerly reigned amongſt you; for tell me, is there any one of them, that hath eſcaped the fertile invention of* *the French ; in fourteen hundred years, which is as long as the monarchy hath continued, there have been above fourteen hundred modes. So that perhaps there is not that habit in the world, that ſhould ſeem ſtrange to you ; and all that we can ſay, when any mode that is preſented to you diſpleaſes you, is, that it is out of faſhion.*

'Tis true, the Chineſe are not ſo fickle as we, but they have carried on things to another extremity ; for, rather than forſake their ancient habit, they renewed a cruel war againſt the Tartars ; I, and the greateſt part of them choſe rather to loſe their heads than their hair : but of all the exceſſes in point of mode, none is more phantaſtical than this ; for how ridiculous ſoever the Chineſe may fear to look, after they have parted with an head of hair, yet they might be convinced that a man, whoſe head is lopp'd off, is worſe disfigured. However, we muſt grant that the conſtancy of this people is admirable, for, when the Tartars attacked them, they had kept their habit for above two thouſand years, which can be aſcribed to nothing but the good order obſerved in the empire, the government of which hath always been uniform, where the laws have been exactly obſerved in the leaſt punctilio's.

But as I am perſuaded theſe ways would not pleaſe all our French people ; ſo the modes, of which we are ſo fond, do not appear ſo handſome to the Chineſe as we imagine ; but above all, the periwig does ſtrangely run in their mind ; and they look upon us as a ſort of people, who for want of a beard, would get an artificial one clapp'd to the chin, that ſhould reach to the knees. This phantaſtical head-dreſs, ſay they, and that prodigious heap of curled hair, are proper upon the ſtage for a man that would repreſent the devil ; but has on the ſhape of a man when he is thus diſguiſed ? Thus the Chineſe politeneſs will go near upon this article alone to arraign us of barbarity.

They have likewiſe much ado to be perſuaded, that long ſhanks diſcovered, with a ſtockin drawn ſtrait, and narrow breeches, look handſome, becauſe they are accuſtomed to an air of gravity that gives them other conceptions. They would ſooner be reconciled with the figure of a magiſtrate ſhaven, without a periwig, who ſhould in his lawyers gown go booted, than with all that gaiety of attire that makes our cavaliers have a fine ſhape, an eaſy and fine gate, a quick and diſingaged carriage; which will by no means go down with them. This ridiculouſneſs pleaſes, and one is oftentimes offended at real prettineſs, according as prejudice or cuſtom have differently changed the imagination; there is notwithſtanding in all theſe modes ſome other intrinſick real beauty, which naked ſimplicity, which nature in her innocence, and exempt from paſſion, have inſpired into men,, for the neceſſity and conveniency of life.

Altho' perſons of quality obſerve exactly all the formalities and decencies ſuitable to their ſtate, and never appear uncovered in publick, how great ſoever the heat be, yet in private, and among their friends, they aſſume a freedom even to a fault; they ever and anon quit their bonnet, ſurtout, veſt and ſhirt, reſerving nothing but a ſingle pair of drawers of white taffaty, or tranſparent linnen; which is the more ſurpriſing, becauſe they condemn all nakedneſs in pictures, and are even offended that our engravers repreſent men with their arms, thighs, and ſhoulders uncovered; they ſeem to be in the right, for being diſpleaſed at the unchriſtian licenſe of our workmen; but yet they are ridiculous to blame that upon a piece of linnen or paper, which they practiſe themſelves with ſo much liberty and undecency in their own proper perſons.

As for the vulgar, they tranſgreſs in that reſpect all the bounds of modeſty, eſpecially in the ſouthern provinces, where watermen, and certain other handicrafts-men, are impudent to the higheſt degree; and in truth the moſt barbarous Indians, notwithſtanding the climate ſeems to excuſe them, appeared to me in this reſpect leſs barbarous than the Chineſe; almoſt all the artificers and inferior tradeſmen go along the ſtreets with ſingle drawers, without cap, ſtockins, or ſhirt, which makes them much tanned and ſwarthy. In the northern provinces they are a little more reſerved; and the cold, in ſpite of their teeth, makes them modeſt, and keep within bounds.

After having deſcribed to you the modes of China, perhaps you may be deſirous, my lord, that I ſhould ſpeak of their ſtuffs. What I have obſerved of them in general is this, their ſilk, without queſtion, is the fineſt in the world; they make of it in many provinces, but the beſt and faireſt is to be found in that of Chekiam, becauſe the ſoil is very proper for mulberry trees, and becauſe the air is endued with a degree of heat and moiſture, more conformable to the worms that make it. Every body deals in it, and the traffick of it is ſo very great, that this province alone is able to ſupply all China, and the greateſt part of Europe.

Yet the fineſt and faireſt ſilks are wrought in the province of Nankim, the rendevouz of almoſt all the good workmen. It is there that the emperor furniſheth himſelf with the ſilks ſpent in the palace, and with thoſe he preſents the lords of the court; the ſilks of Quamtum, notwithſtanding, are valued above all among ſtrangers; and the ſilks of this province are alſo more ſaleable, and go off better than thoſe of all the other provinces of China.

Altho' all theſe ſilks have ſome reſemblance to ours, yet the workmanſhip hath ſomething in it that makes a difference. I have there ſeen pluſh, velvet, tiſſue of gold, ſattin, taffaty, crapes, and ſeveral others, of which I do not ſo much as know the name in France; that which is the moſt current amongſt them is called Touanze; it is a ſort of ſattin, ſtronger, but not ſo gloſſy as ours, ſometimes ſmooth, and ſometimes diſtinguiſhed by flowers, birds, trees, houſes, and ſhady groves.

Theſe figures are not raiſed upon the ground by a mixture of raw ſilk, as our workmen are uſed to do in Europe, which makes our work not ſo durable; all the ſilk in theſe is twiſted, and the flowers are diſtinguiſhed only by the difference of colours, and ſhadowing; when they mix gold or ſilver with it, it does much reſemble our brocado, or flower'd ſilk, but their gold and ſilver is wrought after a manner particular to them alone; for whereas in Europe we draw the gold as fine as poſſibly it can be twiſted with the thread, the Chineſe, to ſave the matter, or becauſe they did not bethink themſelves of this trick, ſatisfy themſelves to gild or ſilver over a long leaf of paper, which they afterwards cut into little ſcrowls, wherein they wrap the ſilk.

There is a great deal of cunning therein, but this gilding will not laſt long, water, or even moiſtneſs itſelf, will tarniſh the ſplendor of it quickly; yet for all that, when the pieces come out of the workman's hands, they are very fine, and one would take them for valuable pieces. Sometimes they are contented only to put into the pieces theſe little ſcrowls of gilded paper, without rolling them upon the thread, and then the figures, altho' pretty and finely turned, do not laſt ſo long by far: and the ſilk thus flower'd is at a lower rate.

Amongſt the different figures they repreſent, the dragon is moſt ordinary; there be two ſorts of them; one, to which they make five claws, called Lom, is only uſed upon the ſtuffs deſigned for the emperor; this is his arms, which Tohi, founder of the empire, firſt took for himſelf and ſucceſſors above four thouſand years ago. The ſecond ſort of dragons hath but four claws, and is named Mam. The emperor Vouvam, who reigned two thouſand eight hundred thirty two years ago, ordained that every body might bear the ſame; and, ſince that time, the uſe of it is grown common.

They make uſe of another kind of ſtuff in ſummer, which the Chineſe call Cha; it is not ſo cloſe, nor hath ſo good a gloſs as our taffaty, but much more ſubſtantial; altho' ſeveral people deſire to have it ſmooth and even, yet moſt wear it powdered with great flowers pierced through, and cut like your Engliſh lace; and many times theſe piercings are ſo numerous, that one can ſcarce diſcern the body of the ſilk. The ſummer garments are extraordinary convenient, and wonderful neat, ſo that all perſons of quality uſe them; beſides the taffaty is not dear, a whole piece, enough to make a long veſt and ſurtout, will not amount to above two guineas.

The third is a particular ſort of taffaty, that ſerves for drawers, ſhirts, linings, they call it Tcheouze; it is cloſe, and withal ſo pliant, that fold, double it, and ſqueeze it with your hand, as long as you pleaſe, you can ſcarce ever rumple it. It is ſold by weight, and is ſo ſerviceable, that they waſh it as they do linnen, without loſing much of its former luſtre.

Beſides the ordinary ſilk of which I but now ſpoke, which we know in Europe, China hath of another ſort, which you meet with in the province of Quamtum. The worms from which they take it are wild, they go to ſeek for them in the woods; and I am not ſure, whether or no they breed them in houſes. This ſilk is of a grey colour, void of any gloſs, ſo that thoſe, who are not well acquainted with it, take the ſtuffs that are made of it for red linnen, or for one of the coarſeſt druggets; yet for all that they infinitely value it, and it coſts more than ſattin, they call them Kien Tcheou; they will endure a long time; tho' ſtrong and cloſe, yet they do not fret; they waſh them as they do linnen; and the Chineſe aſſure us, that ſpots cannot ſpoil them, and that they do not ſo much as take oil itſelf.

Wool is very common, and withal very cheap, eſpecially in the provinces of Xenſi and Xanſi, and Suchven, where they feed abundance of flocks, yet do not the Chineſe make cloth. That of Europe, wherewith the Engliſh furniſh them, is highly eſteemed; but, by reaſon they ſell it much dearer than the fineſt ſilks, they buy but little of it. The Mandarines make themſelves ſtudying gowns for the winter of a kind of coarſe ruſſet, for want of better cloth. As for druggets, ſerges and tammies, we ſcarce meet with better than theirs; the Bonzes wives do commonly work them, becauſe the Bonzes make uſe of them themſelves; and there is a great trade driven of them every where in the empire.

Beſides cotton linnen, that is very common, they uſe alſo for the ſummer nettle linnen for long veſts; but the linnen which is the moſt valued, and is to be found no where elſe, is called Copou; becauſe it is made of a plant that the people of the country call Co, found in the province of Fokien.

It is a kind of creeping ſhrub, whoſe leaves are much bigger than ivy-leaves; they are round, ſmooth, green within, whitiſh, and cottony, or downy, on the outſide; they let them grow and ſpread along the fields. There be ſome of them as thick as your finger, which is pliable, and cottony as its leaves are. When it begins to dry they make the ſheaves of it to rot in water, as they do flax and hemp; they always peel off the firſt ſkin, which they throw away; but of the ſecond, which is much more fine and delicate, they divide it by the hand into very ſlender and very ſmall filaments, without beating or ſpinning it, and make that linnen of which I ſpake ; it is tranſparent, pretty fine, but ſo cool and light, that one would think he had nothing on his back.

All perſons of quality make long veſts of it during the exceſſive heat, with a ſurtout of Cha. In the ſpring and autumn they put on Kien-tcheou, and Touanze in winter, that is to ſay, coarſe ſattin, or flowered ſilk. Grave perſons deſire to have it plain, others wear it flowered ; but nobody, except the Mandarines in the aſſemblies, or upon certain ſolemn viſits, uſes ſilk flower'd with gold or ſilver. The vulgar, that uſually habit themſelves in coarſe linnen dyed blue, or black, quilt it with cotton, or line it with ſheepſkin during the cold weather ; but great perſons line their veſts and ſurtouts with the noble ſkins of ſable or ermine, fox or lamb : they uſe alſo for the ſame purpoſe pluſh and petit-gris.

Becauſe ermine is very rare in China, they content themſelves only to border their veſts and extremity of their ſleeves with it ; that, * which I have ſeen, did not appear to me to be of a fair white.

Sable is pretty well known in France, but much leſs common there than in China, where all the conſiderable Mandarines wear it : one ſkin only of a foot long, and between 4 and 6 inches broad, (for the † animal is but ſmall) will ſometimes coſt 10 crowns ; but when one chooſeth ſome of the fineſt for a compleat habit, the whole lining of a veſt will coſt between 5 and 6000 livres ; yet one may have a pretty handſome one for 200 piſtoles.

Fox-ſkins are likewiſe much uſed, thoſe who would be magnificent take nothing but the belly of this animal, where the hair is long, fine, and ſofteſt ;

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* *They call it* In Chu.

† *They call it* Tiaochu.

ſofteſt; and, of a great number of ſmall pieces patched together, they compoſe an entire lining, which for the veſt and ſurtout comes to a matter of 5 or 600 livres.

There are alſo ſeveral other ſorts of furs that Tartary perhaps ſupplies them withal, which the Mandarines make uſe of to ſit upon the ground, eſpecially at the palace when they wait, and expect the time of their audience. They put ſome of them alſo under the quilt, not only to heat the bed, but alſo to take away its dampneſs. Beſides, there is another * fur of a particular ſpecies, that is perfectly handſome and fine, the hair of it is long, ſoft, and very thick ſet; it is of a pretty whitiſh grey mixed with black, ſtriped with black and yellow liſts, as thoſe of tigers; they make great winter gowns of them to wear in the city, putting the fur on the outſide, ſo that when the Mandarines are thick and ſhort (which is very common with them) beſides two furs underneath for the veſt and ſurtout; when, I ſay, they have put on their back one of theſe furred gowns with long hair, they differ but a little from bears, or from the animal of whom they borrowed the skin; altho' in this condition they think themſelves to be very genteel, and to make a graceful figure.

Of all the furrings, the moſt common are lambskins †. They are white, downy, and very warm, but burthenſome, and, at firſt, of a ſtrong ſmell, in a manner like thoſe greaſy gloves that ſmell of oil: I wonder they bring not up the mode in France; thoſe, who delight in ſlender fine ſhapes, would not ſubmit to it, yet otherwiſe there is nothing more genteel, nor more convenient for winter.

Upon the whole, if great caution be not uſed, all theſe furs are eaſily ſpoiled, eſpecially in hot and moiſt countries; worms breed in them, and the hair falls off:

* *Ta Chu.*

† *Yam pi.*

of: to prevent them, the Chineſe, ſo ſoon as ever the ſummer approaches, expoſe them to the air for for ſome days, when it is fair and dry weather; then they beat them with ſticks, or ſhake them often, to get out the duſt; and when they have incloſed them in huge earthen pots, into which they throw corns of pepper, and other bitter drugs, they ſtop it up very cloſe, and there let them lie till the beginning of winter.

Beſides their uſual garments, there are yet two ſorts that deſerve to be known: They put on one to defend them from the rain; for the Chineſe, who delight in travelling, ſpare for no coſt to travel commodiouſly; they are made of a coarſe taffety, cruſted over with a condenſed oil, which is in lieu of wax, which, being once well dried, makes the ſtuff green, tranſparent, and extraordinary genteel: They make bonnets of it, veſts, and ſurtouts, that reſiſt the rain for ſome time; but it gets thro' all at laſt, unleſs the garment be a choice one, and carefully prepared. The boots are of leather, but ſo little that the ſtockins are ſpoiled at the knee, except one be a horſeback, like the Tartars, with their legs doubled up, and their ſtirrups extremely ſhort.

The mourning habit hath alſo ſomething odd in it. The bonnet, veſts, ſurtout, ſtockins and boots are made of white linen, and from the prince to the moſt inferior handicrafts-men, none dare wear any of another colour. In cloſe mourning the bonnet ſeems phantaſtick, and very difficult to be repreſented; it is of a red and very clear canvas cloth, not much unlike the canvas we uſe for packing up goods. The veſt is kept cloſe with a girdle of canvas; the Chineſe, in this poſture, do at the beginning affect a careleſs behaviour, and grief and ſorrow ſeems painted all over the outward man; but, all being nothing but ceremony and affectation with them, they eaſily put on their own face again; they can laugh and cry both in a breath ; for I have ſeen ſome laugh immediately after they had ſhed abundance of tears over the tomb of their fathers.

Perhaps, my lord, you may have the curioſity to know, after what manner the miſſionaries, who labour about the converſion of the infidels, are habited ; the laws, that ſuffer no foreign mode to take place, determined the firſt jeſuits to take the garb of the Bonzes at the beginning: but this garb, tho' grave and modeſt enough, was ſo cried down by the ignorance and irregular life of thoſe wicked prieſts, that that alone was ſufficient to deprive us of the company and correſpondence of honeſt people.

In effect, nothing was ſo diametrically oppoſite to religion : ſo that, after a long deliberation, they thought it more adviſable to take the ſtudent's habit, which, together with the quality of European doctor, did capacitate us to ſpeak to the people with ſome authority, and to be heard by he Mandarines with ſome reſpect. From that ve-y time, we had free acceſs every where, and God lid ſo far vouchſafe a bleſſing to the labours of ur firſt miſſionaries, that the goſpel in a ſhort time vas propagated with conſiderable ſucceſs.

But in the late revolution of the empire, theſe athers, as well as the Chineſe, were forced to o habited in the Tartarian faſhion, as I told ou. When we viſit the Mandarines upon account f religion, we were forced to wear a veſt and ſur-out of common ſilk ; but at home, we were cloth-d in ſerge or painted linnen.

So that, my lord, preſerving as much as lies in s the ſpirit of poverty ſuitable to our condition, we ndeavour to *become all things to all men*, after the poſtles example, *that we may the more eaſily win ver ſome to Jeſus Chriſt* ; being perſuaded, that, as a miſſionary, the garment, diet, manner of living, and exterior cuſtoms ought all to be referred to the great deſign he propoſes to himſelf, to convert the whole earth. A man muſt be a Barbarian with Barbarians, polite with men of parts, auſtere and rigid to exceſs among the Indian penitents, handſomely dreſs'd in China, and half naked in the wilderneſs of Maduré, to the end that the goſpel always uniform, always unalterable in itſelf, may the more eaſily inſinuate itſelf into the minds of men whom an holy compliance and conformity to cuſtoms, regulated by chriſtian prudence, have already prepoſſeſs'd in favour to us. I am, with the moſt profound reſpect,

My Lord,
Your moſt humble,
and moſt obedient Servant,
L. J.

LETTER VI.

To the Dutcheſs of Bouillon.

Of the Oeconomy and Magnificence of the Chineſe.

Madam,

THE earneſt deſire I have obſerved in your grace, to be fully informed of the preſent ſtate of the miſſions in China, hath been an infinite ſatisfaction to me: but I confeſs, I was a little ſurpriſed, that, when this new world abounds with ſo many curioſities, you ſhould chiefly deſire an account of the Chineſe gallantry and magnificence. I know very well that this is the uſual ſubject of diſcourſe among the ladies, and I could have almoſt expected no more from any other of your ſex.

But for you, madam, when I had the honour to ſee you, I have prepared materials of a quite different nature: I made account you would diſcourſe with me concerning the ingenuity, ſciences, and politeneſs of this people: and whereas travellers do uſually affect to prefer what they have ſeen amongſt foreigners, to that which is found in their native ſoil, I pleaſed myſelf, that I could ſincerely and ſafely tell you, that the French ladies (I mean thoſe, who like you have raiſed themſelves above thoſe toyiſh cares, that do in a manner totally poſſeſs the fair ſex) have more wit, capacity, and a more raiſed genius, even in the ſolid and ſubſtantial ſciences, than all the great doctors of that empire; for, as for politeneſs, I can ſcarce believe, madam, that you can doubt of it, ſince one need not be accompliſhed with half the politeneſs you are miſtreſs of, to deface and eclipſe the moſt polite courts of the Eaſt.

But ſince, either by chance, or by your own choice, you have been pleaſed to confine yourſelf to another ſubject, and that you deſire a methodical account of what I have had the honour to relate to you of it; I ſhall obey you, madam, not only with that profound reſpect I owe to your quality and merit, but alſo with all the ſentiments of grateful acknowledgment which the many honours and favours, I have received from your grace, can inſpire me with.

The Chineſe come far ſhort of us in the magnificence of their houſes, beſides that, the architecture is not beautiful, nor the apartments ſpacious, they do not ſtudy to adorn them, and that chiefly for two reaſons: The firſt is, Becauſe all the palaces of the Mandarines belong to the emperor, he lodges them there; and in ſome places (I cannot ſay in all) the people furniſh them. The people, to be ſure, are always at as little expence as they can, and the Mandarines do not care to ruin themſelves by furniſhing palaces, that they are every day in danger of forſaking, becauſe their places are properly nothing but commiſſions, which are many times taken away upon the leaſt fault.

The ſecond reaſon is fetch'd from the cuſtom of the country, which does not allow to receive viſits in the inner part of the houſe, but only at the entrance in a Divan they have contrived for the ceremonies. It is a banqueting-houſe all open, that hath no other ornament beſides one ſingle order of columns of wood painted or varniſhed, which they uſe only to uphold the beams and timber, that often appears under the tiles, nobody taking care to cover it with a cieling. So that it is no wonder if they retrench all the ſuperfluous ornaments of their apartments, ſeeing foreigners and ſtrangers ſcarce ever ſet foot in them; they have neither looking-glaſſes, tapeſtry-hangings, nor wrought chairs: gildings are not in faſhion, ſaving only in ſome of the emperor's or prince of the blood's apartments. Their beds, which amongſt them are one of the principal ornaments, never come in ſight; and it would be a piece of groſs incivility to carry a ſtranger into a bed-chamber, even when you pretend to ſhew him your houſe.

Inſomuch that all their magnificence may be reduced to cabinets, tables, varniſh'd skreens, ſome pictures, divers pieces of white ſattin, upon which there is writ in a large character ſome ſentence of morality, which is hung here and there in the chamber, together with ſome veſſels of porcelain; neither have they occaſion to uſe even them as we do, becauſe there is no chimney to be ſeen in the chamber.

Nevertheleſs, theſe ornaments, if skilfully managed, are very fine and beautiful: varniſh, which is ſo common in China, is diſpers'd all over; it takes all colours, they mix flowers of gold and ſilver with it, they paint men, mountains, palaces, huntings, birds, combats, and ſeveral figures, that make a baſs relief in the work, and renders it extremely pleaſing and delightful, ſo that in this point the Chineſe make a great ſhow with a little charge.

Beſides the brightneſs and luſtre which is the property of varniſh, it hath moreover a certain quality of preſerving the wood upon which it is applied, eſpecially if they do not mix any other matter with it. Worms do not eaſily breed in it, nay, and moiſture ſcarce ever penetrates it, not ſo much as any ſcent can faſten to it; if during meals there be any greaſe or pottage ſpilt, if it be preſently wiped with a wet clout, one not only finds no remainders or ſigns of it, but does not ſo much as perceive the leaſt ſmell.

People were miſtaken when they fancied that varniſh was a compoſition, and a peculiar ſecret; it is a gum that diſtils from a tree, much what after the ſame manner as roſin doth. In the tuns wherein it is tranſported, it reſembles melted pitch or tar, excepting only that it hath no ſmell when it is uſed. There muſt be oil mix'd with it, to temper it more or leſs, according to the quality of the work.

For tables and ordinary chairs, it is ſufficient to lay on two or three layers of varniſh, which makes it ſo tranſparent, that one may diſcern every vein of the wood thro' it. Now, if you would hide all the matter on which you are at work, you muſt do it over and over again, till at length it be nothing but ice, but ſo fine at firſt, that it may ſerve for a mirror. When the work is dry, they paint upon it ſeveral figures in gold, ſilver, or any other colour; they go over that again, if they pleaſe, with a ſlight touch of varniſh, to give them a luſtre, and the better to preſerve them.

But thoſe, who would perform a finiſhing ſtroke, glew upon the wood a kind of paſteboard, compoſed of paper, packthread, lime, and ſome other ſubſtance well beaten, with which the varniſh incorporateth.

They compoſe a ground of it perfectly even and ſolid, upon which is applied the varniſh by little and little, in little ſtratums, which they dry one after another. Every workman hath a peculiar ſecret to perfect his work, as in all other occupations. But in my opinion, beſides the dexterity and ſlight of hand, and the due tempering the varniſh, that it may be neither too thick nor too thin, patience is what contributes the moſt to the well ſucceeding in this operation. There are very pretty curious cabinets at Tumkim; but what are brought to us from Japan, are herein no way inferior to the China work.

As for porcelain, it is ſuch an ordinary moveable, that it is the ornament of every houſe; the tables, the ſide-boards, nay, the kitchen is cumber'd with it, for they eat and drink out of it, it is their ordinary veſſel: there are likewiſe made huge flower-pots of it. The very architects cover roofs, and make uſe of it ſometimes to incruſtate marble buildings.

Amongſt thoſe that are moſt in requeſt, there are of three different colours; ſome are yellow, yet tho' the earth be very fine, they appear more coarſe than the others; and the reaſon is, becauſe that colour does not admit of ſo fine poliſhing; it is uſed in the emperor's palace. Yellow is his own proper colour, which is not allowed to any perſon to bear; ſo that one may ſafely ſay, that, as for the buſineſs of porcelain, the emperor is the worſt ſerved.

The ſecond ſort is of a grey colour, with abundance of ſmall irregular lines in it, that croſs one another, as if the veſſel was all over ſtriped, or wrought with inlaid or Moſaick work. I cannot imagine how they form theſe figures; for I have much ado to believe that they are able to draw them with a pencil. Perhaps, when the porcelain is baked, and yet hot, it is expoſed to the cold air, or they infuſe it in warm water that opens it in that manner, on all ſides, as it often happens to cryſtals during winter; after that, they add a ſtratum of varniſh to it, which covers theſe inequalities, and, by means of a gentle fire into which they put it again, it is made as even and poliſhed as before. However it is, theſe ſort of vaſes partake of a particular beauty; and ſure I am, the curious amongſt us would much value them.

Laſt of all, the third ſort of porcelain is white, with divers figures of flowers, trees, and birds, which they paint in blue, ſuch as come hither into Europe: this is the commoneſt of all, and every body uſes it. But in reſpect of glaſſes and cryſtals, as all work is not equally beautiful, ſo amongſt porcelains ſome of them are but indifferent, and not worth much more than our earthen ware.

Thoſe that have skill do not always agree in the judgment they paſs upon them; and I perceive, that in China, as well as in Europe, fancy bears a main ſtroke in the matter; yet it is granted by all hands, that four or five different things concur to make them compleat and perfect; the fineneſs of the matter, the whiteneſs, the politeneſs, the painting, the deſigning of the figures, and the faſhion of the work.

The fineneſs is diſcovered by its tranſparency, in which, reſpect is to be had to its thickneſs, the brims are commonly thinner, and it is in that place where they ought to be conſidered: When the veſſel is big, it is a difficult matter to determine any thing thereupon, unleſs one have a mind to break off ſome pieces below; for there the colour of the inner part alone, or, as they term it, the Grain, affords a ſhrewd gueſs, which appears likewiſe, when the two pieces can be joined together again ſo perfectly, that no rupture appears therein, for that is a ſure token of the hardneſs, and conſequently of the fineneſs of the matter.

The whiteneſs is not to be confounded with the brightneſs of the varniſh which is laid over the porcelain, which ſhews like a mirrour ; ſo that, beholding it near to ſome other objects, their colours are ſeen in it ; and this reflection alone is capable of making one paſs a wrong judgment upon its native whiteneſs ; it muſt be carried into the open air, if you would underſtand its beauty or faults perfectly. Altho' this varniſh be perfectly incorporated with the matter, and tho' it is mighty laſting, yet it tarniſhes at long run, and loſeth that brisk ſplendor it had at the beginning, from whence it comes to paſs, that the whiteneſs appears more taking and pretty in old porcelains ; not but the new ones for all that are as good, and will in ſome time aſſume the ſame colour.

The ſmoothneſs and fineneſs of them conſiſt in two things, in the brightneſs of the varniſh, and evenneſs of the matter. The varniſh ſhould not be thick, otherwiſe there will be a cruſt introduced, which will not be incorporated enough with the porcelain ; beſides, its luſtre will be too great and ſprightly. The matter is perfectly equal and even, when it has not the leaſt bump, when there is to be obſerved in it neither grain, riſing, nor depreſſion : There are few veſſels but have ſome one of theſe defects ; there muſt not only be found no ſpots nor flaws, but notice muſt be taken whether there be ſome places brighter than others, which happens when the pencil is unequally poiſed ; which ſometimes alſo happens when the varniſh is laid on, if every part be not equally dry ; for the leaſt moiſture cauſeth a ſenſible difference therein.

The painting is not one of the leaſt beauties of the porcelain ; for that purpoſe one may make uſe of all colours, but commonly they uſe red, and much more blue. I never ſaw any veſſel whoſe red was lively enough ; it is not becauſe the Chineſe have not very lovely red, but perhaps, becauſe the moſt lively and ſubtil parts of this colour are imbibed by the roughneſs of the matter on which it is laid: for the different grounds contribute much to the heightening or leſſening the luſtre of the colours. As for blue, they have it moſt excellent; however, it is very difficult to hit upon that exact temperature, where it is neither too pale, deep, intenſe, nor too bright. But that which workmen moſt diligently ſeek after is, to perfect the extremities of the figures, ſo that the colour do not extend beyond the pencil, to the end that the whiteneſs of the porcelain may not be ſullied by a certain bluiſh water, which flows, if ſpecial care be not taken from the colour itſelf, when it is not well pounded, or when the matter on which it is laid, hath not attained a good degree of dryneſs; much after the ſame manner as happens to paper that blots when it is moiſt, or when you write with naughty ink.

It were well if the Chineſe deſigns in their painting were a little better. Their flowers are pretty well, but their human figures are monſtrous, which diſgrace them among ſtrangers, who imagine, that they are in effect as monſtrous in their ſhape, as they appear in the pictures; yet thoſe are their uſual ornaments. The more regular deſigns and ſkilful draughts would be leſs pleaſing to them than theſe anticks.

To make amends, they are very ingenious and expert in turning their vaſes well, of what ſize ſoever they be. The figure of them is bold, well proportioned, perfectly round; nay, and I do not believe that our ſkilfulleſt workmen are able to faſhion the great pieces better; they, as well as we, put a great value upon ancient vaſes, but for a reaſon quite different from ours; we value them becauſe they are fairer, they for their antiquity; not but that the artificers are as expert, and the matter as good now as heretofore: there are very fine ones made at this day; and I have ſeen at ſome Mandarines houſes whole ſervices that were ſuperfine. But the European merchants do no longer trade with the good workmen, and, having no ſkill in them themſelves, they accept whatſoever the Chineſe expoſe to ſale; for they vend them in the Indies. Beſides no body takes care to furniſh them with examples of draughts, or to beſpeak particular pieces of work beforehand. If Mr. Conſtance had lived, we ſhould quickly have known in France that China had not loſt the ſecret of making porcelain: but this is not the greateſt loſs we have ſuſtained by his death; what religion ſuffers by it, through all the Eaſt, will ſcarce give us leave to take notice of the alterations it hath cauſed in arts and trading.

There is yet another reaſon that makes the curious porcelain ſo rare; the emperor has conſtituted in the province, where the manufacture chiefly is, a particular Mandarine, whoſe care it is to make choice of the faireſt vaſes for the court; he buys them at a very reaſonable rate, ſo that the workmen, being but ill paid, do not their beſt, and are not willing to take any pains for that which will not enrich them. But ſhould a private man employ them, who would not ſpare for coſt and charges, we ſhould have at this day as curious pieces of workmanſhip, as thoſe of the ancient Chineſe.

The China ware that is brought to us from Fokien, does not deſerve the name of it; it is black, coarſe, and is not ſo good as our Fayance. That which is moſt look'd upon is that which is made in the province of Quamſi, the clay is found in one place and the water in another, becauſe it is clearer and cleaner; perhaps alſo, this water they make uſe of before any other, becauſe it is impregnated with ſome peculiar ſalts, proper to purify and refine the clay, or by the more ſtrictly uniting the parts, as it happens in lime, which is good for nothing, if it be not flaked in ſome certain waters, whereas others make it more compact, ſtrong, and adhering.

In brief, it is a miſtake to think that there is requiſite one or two hundred years to the preparing the matter for the porcelain, and that its compoſition is ſo very difficult; if that were ſo, it would be neither ſo common nor ſo cheap. It is a clay ſtiffer than ordinary clays; or rather a kind of a ſoft white ſtone, that is found in the quarries of that province. After having waſh'd the pieces of it, and ſeparated the heterogeneous earth that may chance to be mix'd with it, they bray it ſmall till it be reduc'd to a ſubtil powder. How fine ſoever it may appear, yet they continue pounding it for a long time; altho' by the touch no difference is to be perceived, yet they are perſuaded that it is indeed made much more ſubtil, that the inſenſible parts are leſs mix'd, and that the work thereby comes to be whiter and more tranſparent. Of this ſubtil powder they make a paſte, which they knead, and beat a long while likewiſe, that it may become ſofter, and that the water may be the more perfectly incorporated therewith. When the earth is well moulded, they endeavour the figuring of it. It is not likely that they uſe moulds, as they do in ſome other ſorts of potteries; it is more probable that they faſhion them upon the wheel like us. So ſoon as their work pleaſes them they expoſe it to the ſun, morning and evening, but take it away again when the ſun waxes too hot, for fear of warping it. So the vaſes dry by degrees, and they apply the painting at their leiſure, when they judge the ground proper to receive it; but becauſe neither the vaſes nor the colours have ſufficient luſtre, they make a very fine broth or ly of the matter of the ſame porcelain, wherewith they paſs ſeveral ſtrokes upon the work, that gives them a particular whiteneſs and luſtre; this is what I call the varniſh of the porcelain. They aſſured me in the kingdom of Siam, that they mix'd with it ſome common varniſh, with the compoſition

poſition made of the white of an egg, and ſhining bones of fiſh; but this is but a fancy, and the workmen of Fokien, who work juſt as thoſe of Quamſi, don't do otherwiſe. After all theſe preparations, they put the vaſes in a furnace, wherein they kindle a gentle and conſtant uniform fire, that bakes them without breaking; and, for fear leſt the exterior air ſhould do them damage, they do not draw them out till a long while after, when they have acquired their due conſiſtence, and have been gradually cooled.

This is all, madam, I have to ſay to the myſtery of porcelain, that they have ſo long ſought after in Europe. Providence, and the proſperity of religion, that obliged me to run over the greateſt part of China, did not carry me into the province of Quamſi, where the earth is found whereof they make it; ſo that I do not ſufficiently know it, as to my own particular, ſo far as to be able to deſcribe the nature and particular qualities thereof; perhaps it is not much different from ſome ſoft ſtones that are found in ſeveral provinces of France. And if ſo be the ingenious would pleaſe to make ſome experiments, and operate diligently, by making uſe of ſeveral ſorts of waters, after the above-mentioned manner, it might not be impoſſible to ſucceed.

Beſides theſe varniſh'd cabinets and veſſels of porcelain, the Chineſe adorn likewiſe their apartments with pictures: they do not excel in this art, becauſe they are not curious in perſpective, notwithſtanding they diligently apply themſelves to painting; they take delight in it; and there are a great company of painters among them: ſome paint the ceiling, repreſenting, upon the chamber-walls, an order of architecture without ſymmetry, by bands or fillets continued all along around at the top and bottom of the wall, and above the capital of the column, which contains only ſingle columns, placed at an equal diſtance, without any other ornament of architecture. Others only whiten the chamber, or glew paper upon it. They hang the pictures of their anceſtors up and down, with ſome maps and pieces of white ſattin, on which are painted flowers, fowls, mountains and palaces; upon ſome others they write in capital letters ſentences of morality, that explain the maxims and rules of perfect government. Some chairs, varniſh'd tables, ſome cabinets, flower-pots, and lanthorns of ſilk, well ordered, and placed in due proportion, make a pretty handſome apartment.

Altho' you do not enter the bed-chamber, yet are their beds very fine; in ſummer they have taffaty curtains powdered with flowers, trees, and birds, in gold and ſilk embroidery. The ſort of work that comes from the province of Nankim is in requeſt, and this is the moſt noble and fine of all the Chineſe furniture. Others have curtains of the fineſt gaze, which is no ſecurity againſt the weather, but cloſe enough to defend them againſt flies and gnats, that are intolerable in the night. In winter they make uſe of coarſe ſattin ſtitched with dragons and other figures, according as their fancy guides them: the counterpain is in a manner the ſame. They do not uſe feather-beds, but their cotton quilts are very thick; their bedſtead ordinarily is of joiners work, beautified with figures. I have ſeen ſome very fine and exquiſite.

By all that I have ſaid, you may judge, madam, that theſe people have ſhut themſelves up within the bounds of neceſſity and profit, without being over ſollicitous about magnificence; their houſes are neat and decent, but not fine: they ſeem ſtill more negligent as to their gardens; they have in that reſpect conceptions much different from ours; for except places deſigned for the ſepulchre of their anceſtors, which they leave untilled, they would think themſelves out of their wits to put the ground to no other uſe than to make alleys and walks, to cultivate flowers, and plant groves of unprofitable trees. The benefit of the commonwealth commands that all ſhould be ſowed; and their own particular intereſt, that more nearly concerns them than the publick good, doth not permit them to prefer pleaſure to profit.

'Tis true, the flowers of the country do not deſerve their looking after; they have none curious; and tho' many may be met with like thoſe in Europe, yet they cultivate them ſo ill, that one has much ado to know them. Neverthеleſs there are trees in ſome places that would afford great ornament in their gardens, if they knew how to order them. Inſtead of fruit, they are almoſt all the year long laden with flowers of a florid carnation; the leaves are ſmall, like thoſe of the elm, the trunk irregular, the branches crooked, and bark ſmooth. If alleys were made of them, mixing therewith (which might eaſily be done) ſome orange trees, it would be the moſt pleaſant thing in the world; but, ſeeing the Chineſe walk not much, alleys do not agree with them.

Amongſt other trees they might diſpoſe of in gardens, there is one they call the Outom-chu, reſembling the ſycomore; the leaves are in a diameter between eight or nine inches, faſtened to a ſtalk a foot long, it is extremely tufted, and laden with cluſters of flowers, ſo thick ſet, that the ſun cannot pierce it with his rays: the fruit, which is extraordinary ſmall, notwithſtanding the tree is very large, is produced after this manner: Towards Auguſt, or the end of July, there ſpring, out of the very point of the branches, little bunches of leaves different from the other; they are whiter, ſofter, and as broad, and are in lieu of flowers; upon the border of each of theſe leaves grow three or four ſmall grains or kernels, as big as green peaſe, that incloſe a white ſubſtance,

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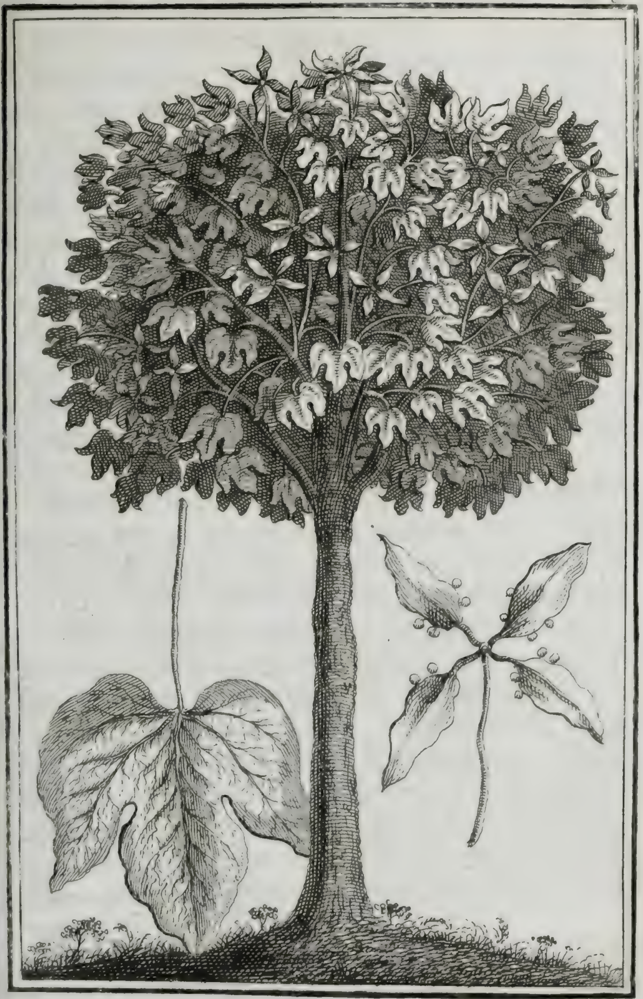

Outom-Chu. A Tree in China.

ſubſtance, very pleaſant to the taſte, like to that of an hazle nut that is not yet ripe. This tree being fruitful, and the manner of bearing its fruit being ſomething extraordinary, I was apt to believe, madam, you might be deſirous to ſee the figure of it, which I have cauſed to be engraven.

The Chineſe, who ſo little apply themſelves to order their gardens, and give them real ornaments, do yet delight in them, and are at ſome coſt about them; they make grotto's in them, raiſe little pretty artificial eminences, tranſport thither by pieces whole rocks, which they heap one upon another, without any further deſign than to imitate nature. If they could, beſides all this, have the convenience of ſo much water as is neceſſary to water their cabbage and liguminous plants, they would deſire no more. The emperor hath fountains, after the European manner; but private perſons content themſelves with their ponds and wells.

But altho' the Chineſe neglect the ornaments of their houſes, yet no people affect more to appear magnificent in publick. The government, that condemns, or rather does not allow, but regulates expences as to other matters, does not only approve of this, but contributes to it on theſe occaſions, for reaſons that I ſhall tell you in the ſequel of the hiſtory.

When perſons of quality receive viſits, or make any, when they go along the ſtreets, or when upon their journey, but eſpecially at ſuch time when they appear before the emperor, or make their addreſs to the viceroys, they are always accompanied with a train and air of grandeur that fills one with aſtoniſhment.

The Mandarines, richly habited, are carried in a ſedan gilded, and open, borne upon the ſhoulders of eight, or ſixteen perſons, accompanied with all the officers of their tribunal, who ſurround them with umbrello's and other marks of their dignity. Some walk before them two and two, bearing chains, faſces, eſcutcheons of varniſh'd wood, upon which may be read, in large gold characters, all the titles of honour annex'd to their places of truſt, together with a brazen baſon, upon which they beat a certain number of ſtrokes, according to the rank they bear in the province; they continually ſpeak aloud, and threaten the people to make way. Other officers follow in the ſame order, and ſometimes four or five gentlemen on horſeback bring up the rear. Some Mandarines never appear in publick without a train of three or fourſcore domeſticks.

Thoſe that belong to the army go commonly on horſeback, and, if of any conſiderable rank, they are evermore at the head of twenty-five or thirty cavaliers. The princes of the blood at Pekin are preceded by four of their officers, and follow themſelves in the midſt of a ſquadron that marches without order. But then they wear no liveries in China, but the domeſticks are habited according to the quality of their maſters in black ſattin, or painted linnen. Altho the horſes be neither fine nor well managed, yet are the trappings and harneſs very magnificent; the bits, ſaddle, and ſtirrups are gilded, or elſe of ſilver. Inſtead of leather, they make bridles of two or three twiſts of coarſe pink'd ſattin, two fingers broad. Under the horſe's neck, at the beginning of the breaſt-plate, hang two great taſſels of that curious red horſe-hair wherewith they cover their bonnets, which are faſtened to two huge buttons of braſs gilded or waſh'd with ſilver, hung at rings of the ſame metal; this ſhews fine in a cavalcade, but upon a long journey, eſpecially upon a courſe, it is cumberſome.

Not only the princes and perſons of the higheſt rank appear in publick with a train, but even thoſe of a meaner quality go always on horſeback along the ſtreets, or in a cloſe ſedan, followed by ſeveral footmen

men; the Tartarian ladies do often make uſe of calaſhes with two wheels, but they have not the uſe of the coach.

The magnificence of the Chineſe Mandarines principally diſplays itſelf in the journeys they take by water; the prodigious bigneſs of their barges, that are little inferior to ſhips, the finery, carving, painting and gilding of the apartments, the great number of officers and ſeamen that ſerve aboard, the different badges of their dignity every where diſplayed, their arms, flags, ſtreamers, and the like, do abundantly diſtinguiſh them from the Europeans, who are never worſe accoutred, or more careleſs than when they travel.

Beſides, the Chineſe have their ſolemn feaſts, which they celebrate with great pomp and charges; the firſt three days in the year are ſpent in rejoycing throughout the whole empire; they array themſelves magnificently, they viſit one another, they ſend preſents to all their friends, and to all the perſons whom it any way concerns them to obſerve. Gaming, feaſting, and comedies take up every body's time. Ten or twelve days before abundance of little robberies are committed, becauſe thoſe, who are deſtitute of money, ſeek how to come by it, and are reſolved to have ſome whoever goes without, to ſupply them in theſe divertiſements.

The 15th day of the firſt month is ſtill more ſolemn; they call it the Day or Feaſt of Lanthorns; becauſe they hang them up in all the houſes, and in all the ſtreets, in ſuch a great number, that it is a madneſs rather than a feſtival: they light up, it may be, that day two hundred millions. You will ſee, madam, by what I am going to relate, that they have run into extremes in this ceremony, which otherwiſe might have been tolerated, as ſeveral other cuſtoms are, to comply with that people's humour,

but

but which now are become the moſt ſerious delight of perſons of quality.

They expoſe to view that day lanthorns of all prices; ſome of them coſt two thouſand crowns; and ſome of the nobility retrench every year ſomething from their table, apparel or equipage, to appear magnificent in lanthorns. It is not the materials that are dear, the gilding, ſculpture, the painting, ſilk and varniſh make all the ſhow. As for the bigneſs it is immenſe. There are ſome of them to be ſeen of upward of twenty ſeven feet diameter: theſe are halls, or chambers, and three or four of theſe machines would make pretty handſome apartments; inſomuch that you will admire, madam, when I tell you that in China we may eat, lie, receive viſits, repreſent comedies, and dance balls in a lanthorn.

A publick bonfire is little enough to enlighten it; but becauſe it would be inconvenient, they are ſatiſfied with an infinite number of wax-candles or lamps, which at a diſtance ſhew very pretty. There are alſo repreſented divers ſhows to gratify the vulgar; and there are perſons concealed, who, by the help of ſeveral little machines, make puppets to play of the bigneſs of men and women, the actions of which are ſo natural, that even thoſe, who are acquainted with the trick, are apt to be miſtaken: for my part, madam, I was not deceived, becauſe I was never preſent at theſe ſpectacles. What I relate is upon the report of the Chineſe, and upon the credit of ſome relations whoſe authors are well known, and whom I ſhould be loth to condemn.

Beſides theſe prodigious lanthorns, there are an infinite number of a middle ſize, of which I can more ſafely ſpeak; I have ſeen of them not only neat, but magnificent; they are commonly compoſed of ſix faces, or pains, each of which makes a frame four feet high, a foot and an half broad, of varniſh'd wood, and adorned with ſome gildings.

ings. They hang it on the inſide with a web of fine tranſparent ſilk, whereon are painted flowers, trees, rocks, and ſometimes human figures. The painting is very curious, the colours lively, and when the wax-candles are lighted, the light diſperſeth a ſplendor that renders the work altogether agreeable.

Theſe ſix pannels join'd together compoſe an hexagon, cloſed at the top by ſix carved figures, that make the crown of it. There are hung round about broad ſtrings of ſattin of all colours, like ribbons, together with divers other ſilken ornaments that fall upon the angles, without hiding any thing of the light, or pictures. We ſometimes uſe them for an ornament to our churches. The Chineſe hang them in windows, in their halls, and ſometimes in publick places.

The feaſt of lanthorns is alſo celebrated by bonfires that are kindled at that time in all quarters of the city, and by fireworks; for there is no body but lets off ſquibs aud crackers. Some have ſpoken of theſe as the fineſt fireworks in the world. We are told that there appear figures of whole trees covered with leaves and fruit, you may there diſtinguiſh the cherries, raiſins, apples and oranges, not only by their figures, but alſo by their particular colour; every thing is painted to the life, inſomuch that one would really imagine that they are naturally trees that are enlightened in the night, and not an artificial fire, on which they have beſtowed the figure and appearance of trees.

Theſe deſcriptions, in ſome relations of China, excite in thoſe, who travel thither, a real paſſion to behold all theſe miracles; I ſhould have been very glad, as others are, to have upon my own perſonal knowledge been able to have related them. I have often ſought for an occaſion, but all in vain. Theſe fires are not ſo ordinary as people imagine, and to retrieve them it will perhaps be neceſſary to go back to their time who writ of them. The father miſſionaries that ſojourn at Pekin, who have been eye-witneſſes of what was performed on this account in the emperor's palace, have often told me, that it was not at all as they imagined it to be, and at the bottom, that there was nothing very extraordinary in it.

Nevertheleſs, madam, it is not juſt wholly to condemn theſe authors, as perſons of no credit; they are good honeſt miſſionaries, who would not impoſe upon us at pleaſure, and what I have ſeen in India, and eſpecially upon the coaſt of Coromondel, may juſtify them in ſome reſpect; they do there really repreſent all ſorts of figures, not by artificial works that burſt in the air like our ſquibs (for to me it ſeems not poſſible to reduce flame to ſuch determined figures as would be neceſſary to diſtinguiſh raiſins and leaves, and much leſs to imitate every reſpective colour that is natural to fruits) but by means of a combuſtible matter compounded of ſulphur, camphire, and ſome other ingredients, wherewith they dawb pieces of wood in form of a croſs, of trees, and flowers, or in any other form they pleaſe.

As ſoon as they have given fire to it, that expanded gum is ſet on fire on all ſides like coal, and repreſents, till it be totally conſumed, the figure of the wood on which it was applied; ſo that it is no great wonder that they ſhould make trees and fruits of fire; and I do imagine thoſe, they ſo much magnify in China, may be ſome ſuch thing.

Not but that theſe ſorts of fires have their beauty; for, beſides their particular colour, the prettieſt, moſt ſplendid, and withal the moſt pleaſant to the eye imaginable, it is no mean ornament in a publick illumination, to be able to repreſent men and horſes of fire, palaces all on fire, with their order of architecture, cartouches, and armories of light, and a great company of other repreſentations, that might be made in Europe with a great deal more exactneſs than in the Eaſt; where the artificers neither have ingenuity to contrive great deſigns, nor dexterity enough perfectly to execute them.

Perhaps, madam, you will have the curioſity to learn what might have given occaſion to the Chineſe to ordain ſuch an extravagant feſtival as this, whereof I have the honour to ſpeak to your grace. As it is very ancient, ſo the original ſeems very obſcure. The vulgar aſcribe it to an accident that happened in the family of a famous Mandarine, whoſe daughter, walking one evening upon the banks of a river, fell in, and was drowned; the afflicted father, with his family, run thither, and the better to find her, he cauſed a great company of lanthorns to be lighted. All the inhabitants of the place thronged after him with torches, they ſearched for her all night to no purpoſe, and the Mandarine's only comfort was to ſee the willingneſs and readineſs of the people, every one of which ſeem'd, as if he had loſt his own ſiſter, becauſe they look'd upon him as their father.

The year enſuing they made fires upon the ſhore on the ſame day, they continued the ceremony every year, every one lighted his lanthorn, and by degrees it commenc'd into a cuſtom. The Chineſe are pretty ſuperſtitious in this reſpect; but there is no probability that ſuch a ſmall loſs ſhould have ſuch a mighty influence upon a whole empire.

Some Chineſe doctors pretend that this feſtival deduceth its original from a ſtory which they report in the manner following: Three thouſand five hundred and eighty three years ago, China was governed by a prince named Ki, the laſt emperor of the firſt race, whom Heaven was pleaſed to endue with qualities capable of conſtituting an hero, if love to women, and the ſpirit of debauchery, that took poſſeſſion of his heart, had not reduced him to a monſter in the empire, and an object of abhorrence in nature.

He had rare parts, a winning, pleaſing way with him, great courage, and was of ſuch extraordinary ſtrength of body, that he broke iron with his hand. But this Sampſon had his miſtreſſes, and grew weak; amongſt other extravagancies, they relate, that he exhauſted all his treaſures in building a tower of precious ſtones to honour the memory of a concubine; and that he filled a pool with wine, for him and three thouſand young men to bathe in, after a laſcivious manner. Theſe exceſſes, and many other abominations, prevailed with the wiſeſt of his court to offer him ſome advice, according to the cuſtom, but he put them to death; yea, and he impriſoned one of the kings of the empire, who endeavoured to divert him from theſe diſorders: at length he committed a fact that conſummated the deſtruction of himſelf and all his family.

One day, in the heat of his debaucheries and jollity, complaining that life was too ſhort, *I ſhould be content*, ſays he to the queen whom he doated on, *if I could make you eternally happy; but in a few years, nay in a few days peradventure death will, in ſpite of us, put an end to our pleaſures; and all my power will not ſuffice to give you a life longer than that which the loweſt of my ſubjects hopes to have; this thought continually troubles my ſpirit, and diſperſes over my heart a bitterneſs that hinders me from reliſhing the ſweetneſs of life: why cannot I make you reign for ever? and ſeeing there are ſtars that never ceaſe ſhining, muſt you needs be ſubject to death? you that ſhine more bright upon earth, than all the ſtars do in heaven.*

'Tis true, my lord, ſaith this fooliſh princeſs, *that you cannot make your life eternal, but it depends on you to forget the brevity of it, and to live as tho' you ſhould never die: what need have we of the ſun and moon to*

meaſure the duration of our life? The morning ſtar that riſes every morning, and the night that comes every evening, do continually put us in mind of the beginning and end of our days; as thoſe begin and end, ſo do ours, that are begun, advance with precipitation and will ſpeedily be at an end.

Come, come, ſir, let us no longer caſt our eyes upon theſe globes that roll over our heads: have you a mind once for all to cure your imagination? build yourſelf a new heaven, ever enlightened, always ſerene, always favourable to your deſires; where we ſhall perceive not the leaſt footſtep of the inſtability of human things. You may eaſily do it, by erecting a great and magnificent palace, ſhut up on all ſides from the light of the ſun; you may hang up all around magnificent lanthorns, whoſe conſtant ſplendor will be preferable to that of the ſun.

Cauſe to be tranſported thither whatſoever is capable of contributing to your pleaſure; and, for fear of being one moment diſtracted by them, break off all correſpondence with other creatures. We will both of us enter into this new world that you ſhall create: I will be to you in lieu of all things; you alone will there yield me more pleaſure than all the old world can offer; yea, nature itſelf, that will be renewed for our ſakes, will render us more happy than the gods are in heaven. 'Tis there that we will forget the viciſſitude of days and nights; time ſhall be no more in reſpect of us; no more incumbrance, no more ſhadow, no more clouds nor change in life; and provided, my lord, that you on your part will be always conſtant, always paſſionate, my felicity will ſeem to me unalterable, and your happineſs will be eternal.

The emperor, whether it was that he thought he could deceive himſelf, or whether he had a mind to pleaſe the queen, I cannot tell; but he cauſed this inchanted caſtle to be built, and there immured her and himſelf. There he paſs'd ſeveral months immerſed in delights, and wholly taken up with his new life; but the people, not being able to endure ſuch exceſs, obliged one of the wiſeſt kings of the empire to declare againſt him.

So ſoon as the emperor had notice of the conſpiracy, he appeared preſently in the old world, which, whether he would or no, ſtuck more to his heart than the new: he appears at the head of an army to puniſh this rebel; but ſeeing himſelf abandoned by the people, whom he had ſo fooliſhly deſerted, he thought it his wiſeſt courſe to abdicate, and betake himſelf to flight. During the three remaining years of his life, he wandered from province to province incognito in a poor condition, always in danger of being diſcovered, as if God, by this diſquiet and continual agitation, had a mind to puniſh him for that ſoft and effeminate repoſe, wherein he thought to have found conſtant delights and eternal felicity. In the mean time they deſtroyed his palaces, and to preſerve the memory of ſuch an unworthy action to poſterity, they hung up lanthorns in every quarter of the city. This cuſtom became anniverſary, and ſince that time a conſiderable feſtival in the whole empire; it is ſolemnized at Hamcheu, with more magnificence than any where elſe: and the report goes that the illuminations there are ſo ſplendid, that an emperor once, not daring openly to leave his court to go thither, committed himſelf, with the queen, and ſeveral princeſſes of his family, into the hands of a magician, who promiſed him to tranſport them thither in a trice. He made them in the night to aſcend magnificent thrones that were borne up by ſwans, which in a moment arrived at Hamcheu.

The emperor ſaw at his leiſure all the ſolemnity, being carried upon a cloud, that hovered over the city, and deſcended by degrees; and came back again with the ſame ſpeed and equipage, no body at court perceiving his abſence. This is not the firſt fable the Chineſe have told; they have ſtories upon every thing, for they are ſuperſtitious to exceſs. And in point of magick, be it feigned or true, there is no people in the world that have come near them.

However that be, certain it is, that they take huge delight in publick illuminations; and one of their kings, who for his good qualities was become the darling of the people, once thought he could not better demonſtrate to them his reciprocal affection, than by inventing for their ſakes ſuch like feaſts. So that once a year, for eight nights one after another, he opened his palace,which they took care to illuminate by abundance of lanthorns and fireworks. He appeared in perſon without any guards, and mixed in the middle of the croud, not ſuffering them to diſtinguiſh him from others, to the end that every one might enjoy the liberty of ſpeaking, playing, and hearing divers concerts of muſick there performed.

This action hath rendered this prince renowned in the Chineſe hiſtory; but what would they have ſaid if they had chanced to be in the apartment of Verſailles, where the beſt and moſt potent of kings ſo often aſſembles all the innocent pleaſures that chriſtianity allows, to make his court, if poſſible, as happy as himſelf; if they did but behold thoſe illuminations, thoſe concerts, thoſe ſports, thoſe magnificent banquets, and the prince himſelf ſtriving to mix with the multitude; nay, and would be unknown, were he not diſtinguiſhed by an air of grandeur independent on his dignity,whereof he cannot diveſt himſelf.

Since I am ſpeaking, madam, of the magnificence of the Chineſe, I cannot, without being wanting in a material point, paſs over in ſilence what relates to their emperors, who never appear in publick, but as ſo many deities, environed with all the ſplendor that may attract the reſpect and veneration of the people. Heretofore they rarely ſhewed themſelves; but the Tartars, who reign at preſent, are much more popular, and the late king did not ſtand ſo much upon nice punctilio's. The preſent emperor in that, as well as in all things elſe, obſerves a medium, which contents his own nation, without totally diſpleaſing the Chineſe. Nevertheleſs, as moderate as he is, in compariſon of the ancients, one may boldly ſay, he never marches but at the head, or in the midſt of an army.

At ſuch time he is accompanied with all the lords of the court: there is nothing but ſilks, gildings, and precious ſtones, every thing there is ſplendid and pompous; the arms, the horſes harneſs, the umbrello's, the ſtreamers, and a thouſand other badges of royal dignity, or of the particular quality of every prince, every where ſparkle at that time. In a word, there is nothing more regular on theſe occurrences than this crowd; every one knows his reſpective rank; and the head of that man, or at leaſt his fortune, lies at ſtake, who ſhall preſume indiſcreetly to diſcompoſe the order of the march.

When he takes a progreſs to viſit the provinces of the empire, he goes commonly poſt, followed by a few guards and ſome truſty officers; but in all the cities upon the road, and in all the difficult paſſages, there are ſo many troops drawn up into battalia, that he ſeems to ride poſt croſs an army.

He goes ſometimes into Tartary to take the divertiſement of hunting, but yet always accompanied as if he went to the conqueſt of ſome new empire. He carries along with him no leſs than forty thouſand men, who endure a great deal of hardſhip, whether the weather be hot or cold, becauſe they encamp in a very inconvenient manner; nay, and it ſometimes happens, that, in one of theſe toilſome huntings, there die more horſes than he would loſe in a pitch'd battle; but he counts the deſtruction of ten thouſand horſes as nothing.

The fathers that accompany him thither ſay, that never does his magnificence more diſplay itſelf than upon this occaſion; there he ſees ſometimes thirty or forty petty Tartar kings, that come to addreſs him, or pay him tribute; yea, there be ſome of them that bear the name of Ham or Cham, that is to ſay, emperor; they are all of them juſt as the Mandarines of the firſt order, his penſioners; he gives them his daughters in marriage; and, to make them the more ſure to his intereſt, he declares himſelf their protector againſt all the weſtern Tartars, who often annoy them; nay, and have ſometimes forces enough to attack China itſelf with ſome face of good ſucceſs.

Whilſt the croud of theſe petty ſovereigns appears in the emperor's camp, the court is wonderful ſumptuous, and to the end he may poſſeſs theſe Barbarians with ſome idea of the power of China, the train, habits, and tents of the Mandarines are rich and glorious even to exceſs. This is what the miſſionaries, who have been witneſſes of the ſame, do report; and I ſuppoſe we may give credit to their relations not only becauſe they all unanimouſly agree in this matter, but alſo becauſe what they ſay does altogether comport with the genius of the Chineſe.

That, which the relation of father Magalhen's, newly tranſlated with learned and uſeful notes, ſays, concerning the pompous march of the emperor, when he goes to the temple to offer ſacrifices to Heaven, hath ſomething odd in it, and deſerves here to be repeated; and ſo much the more, becauſe theſe things are neither falſe nor magnified; for the orders obſerved in publick ceremonies are known to every body to be ſo regular, that the very emperor dares not add or diminiſh the leaſt article.

This pompous ceremony begins with twenty four trumpets, adorned with golden coronets; with 24 drums ranked, each of them in two files; 24 men armed with truncheons varniſh'd and gilt, 6 or 8 feet long, follow them in the ſame order and rank; after that follow 100 ſoldiers bearing noble halbards, armed with a ſemicircle of iron, in form of a creſcent, followed with 100 ſerjeants at mace, and two officers whoſe pikes are painted with red varniſh in different places, with flowers and golden figures.

Next after this firſt file are borne 400 curiouſly wrought lanthorns, 400 flambeaux of a gilded wood that flame like our torches, 200 lances charged with huge tufts of ſilk, 24 banners, whereon are painted the ſigns of the zodiack, and 56 others that repreſent the celeſtial conſtellations: there are to be ſeen moreover 200 fans with figures of dragons, and other animals; 24 umbrello's ſtill more magnificent, and a livery cupboard borne by the officers of the palace, whoſe utenſils are of gold.

All this does immediately precede the emperor, who at laſt appears on horſeback, glorіouſly attired, ſurrounded with ſix white led horſes, whoſe harneſs is covered with gold and precious ſtones with 100 life-guards and pages of honour; they bear up before him an umbrello that ſhades him and the horſe, and dazzles the ſight with all the ornaments that man could poſſibly invent to enrich it.

The emperor is followed by all the princes of the blood, by the Mandarines of the firſt order, by the viceroys and principal lords of the court, all in their formalities: immediately after come 500 young gentlemen of quality, which may be called the band of gentlemen penſioners, attended by 1000 footmen, array'd in carnation ſilk, bordered with flowers, ſtitched with little ſtars in gold and ſilver. This is properly the king's houſhold.

This retinue is ſtill more extraordinary by what follows, than by what went before: for immediately 36 men bear an open ſedan that reſembles a triumphal chair, 120 bearers ſupport another cloſe one, ſo big, that one would take it for an intire apartment. Afterwards there appear four chariots, the two firſt of which are drawn by elephants, and the other two by horſes. Each ſedan and chariot hath a company of 50 men for its guard: the charioteers are richly apparelled, and the elephants, as well as the horſes, are covered with embroidered houſings.

Then 2000 Mandarine officers, and 2000 officers of the army, all moſt richly cloathed, marching in order, and according to their cuſtom, with a gravity that commands reſpect, bring up the rear of this ſtately ſhow. It is not needful that the court ſhould be at great charges for this pomp, and as ſoon as ever the emperor is pleaſed to go offer ſacrifice, they always are in a readineſs to attend him in this order. I do not know that, in our entertainments and ſolemn feſtivals, we have any thing more ſplendid and magnificent.

But the emperor of China never appears greater than when he gives audience to foreign ambaſſadors; that prodigious number of troops who are at that time in arms, that incredible number of Mandarines in their formalities, diſtinguiſhed according to their rank and quality, placed in order, without confuſion, without noiſe, without diſturbanee, in ſuch order as they would appear in the temples of their gods; the miniſters of ſtate, the lord chief juſtices of all the ſovereign courts, the petty kings, the princes of the blood, the heirs of the crown, more humble before this prince, than they are exalted above the people: the emperor himſelf ſeated on a throne, who beholds proſtrate at his feet all this crowd of adorers; all this, I ſay, bears an air of ſovereignty and grandeur in it, that is to be found no where but in China, which chriſtian humility does not ſo much as permit kings to deſire in the moſt glorious courts of Europe.

I ſhould never make an end, if I had a mind to deſcend to all the particulars of the publick ceremonies, where the Chineſe diſplay all their magnificence; I ſuppoſe, madam, I have ſpoken enough to give you a juſt idea of it; now if you pleaſe to permit me, in the cloſe of this letter, to add what I think of it myſelf, in reference to France, where the riches and ambition of private perſons have carried ſtatelineſs to a higher pitch, than in any other realm in Europe; it ſeems to me that the Chineſe do almoſt ever ſurpaſs us in common and publick actions, by a more glorious and ſpecious outſide; but that in domeſtick things, our apartments are incomparably richer, the retinue of perſons of quality more decently cloathed, tho' not ſo numerous, the equipages more commodious, the tables better ſerved, and generally ſpeaking, the expence more conſtant, and better regulated. I am with a moſt profound reſpect,

Madam,
Your moſt humble,
and moſt obedient Servant,
L. J.

LETTER VII.

To the Archbiſhop of Rheims, *firſt Peer of* France.

Of the Language, Characters, Books, and Morality of the Chineſe.

My Lord,

AFTER having had the honour to entertain your grace at your ſpare hours, concerning the different cuſtoms of the empire of China, I believed you would not take it amiſs to ſee from me an account of what relates to their language, characters, books, and morals.

There are certain points of hiſtory that one cannot enter upon without much caution, and eſpecially when one is to explain them to ſuch a perſon as yourſelf, whoſe particular character it is, to know exactly and moſt perfectly whatever you ſtudy; to ſatisfy ſuch a mind, there is requiſite an exactneſs and method, which the freedom and looſeneſs of diſcourſe will not admit of.

I well know, my lord, that it is difficult to add, upon this ſubject, any new knowledge to that which hath rendered you one of the moſt knowing prelates of the age; how good and diffuſive ſoever the morality of China may be, yet are they but the faint glimpſes of narrow and imperfect reaſon, which diſappear as ſoon as they are brought near thoſe divine lights that religion diſcovers to us, and whereinto you have ſo long dived by the continual reading of fathers, canons, and councils.

Nevertheleſs, altho' all the philoſophy of that renowned nation be not able to inſtruct us, yet is it worth our inquiry to know, to what pitch of perfection it heretofore brought ſciences, and that too at a time when other people in the world were either ignorant or barbarous. Their chief learning lies in their writing and their language, wherefore I will firſt ſpeak of that: what I have obſerved moſt remarkable therein is this:

The Chineſe language hath no analogy with any of thoſe that are in vogue in the world, no affinity neither in the ſound, in the pronunciation of the words, nor yet in the diſpoſing and ranging of the conceptions. Every thing is myſterious therein, and you will, no queſtion, ſtand amazed, my lord, to underſtand that all the words of it may be learnt in two hours, altho' there is required ſeveral years ſtudy to ſpeak it: that one may be ready to read all the books, and to underſtand them perfectly, without apprehending any thing, if another read it; that a doctor may compoſe a book with all the elaborateneſs poſſible, and this very ſame doctor may not know enough of it to explain himſelf in ordinary converſation; that a mute, inſtructed in the characters, might with his fingers, without writing, ſpeak as faſt as his auditors can conveniently hear him; in a word, that the ſelf ſame words do often ſignify quite different things, and of two perſons that ſhall pronounce them, it will be a compliment in the mouth of the one, and foul language in the mouth of the other. Theſe paradoxes, how ſurpriſing ſoever they may ſeem, are very true, notwithſtanding; and your grace will grant it, if you pleaſe to give yourſelf never ſo little trouble, to caſt your eyes upon what I ſhall write to you about it.

This tongue contains no more than three hundred and thirty words, or thereabouts, all of one ſyllable, or at leaſt they ſeem to be ſo, becauſe they pronounce them ſo ſuccinctly, that a man can ſcarce diſtinguiſh the ſyllables: although it be a tedious thing to read the whole ſeries of them, yet ſhall I deſcribe them in this place, as well to let you underſtand the tone, as to give you the ſatisfaction to ſee, at one view, compriſed in one ſingle page, a language ſo ancient, ſo famous, and I may ſay, ſo eloquent as this is.

Theſe few words would not be ſufficient to expreſs a man's ſelf aptly upon all ſubjects, to ſupply words for arts and ſciences, to maintain eloquence in diſcourſe, or in writing, which is very different among the Chineſe, if they had not an art to multiply the ſenſe, without multiplying the words. This art chiefly conſiſts in the accents they give them; the ſame word pronounced with a ſtronger or weaker inflexi-

A Liſt of all t

ca	cai	cam	can	cao	(
chin	chéou	chï	chiao	chim	c
ſa	ſam	fan	féou	fi	ſ
han	hao	he	hem	hen	h
him	hin	hio	hiu	hiuè	hie
hoei	hoen	hou	houm	houon	
in	ïo	iu	ïué	ïuen	ïı
kié	kien	kïeou	kim	kin	k
lan	lao	le	leam	leao	le
lio	liu	lo	lou	loui	lo
mau	me	mem	men	meou	ı
moui	moum	mouon	na	naï	n
ngeou	ngo	ni	niam	niau	n
noui	noum	nouon	nun	o, ou	ı
pié	pien	pim	pin	po	p
quoueï	quouen	qouo	quouon	ſa	ſ
ſiam	ſiao	ſié	ſien	ſiéou	ſ
ſiu	ſoui	ſu	ſoum	ſun	ſo
ti	tiao	tie	tien	tieou	ti
tſam	tſan	tſao	tſé	tſem	tſ
tſio	tſiu	tſiuè	tſiuen	tſioum	tſ
tchaï	tcham	thcan	tchao	tché	tc
tchoua	tchouen	tchouè	tchoum	tchun	ï
von	vou	voum	328.		
		oum			

A Liſt of all the Words that form the Chineſe *Tongue.*

ca	cai	cam	can	cao	co	cou	coue coum	cha	chay	cham	chan	chao	ché
chin	chéou	chï	chiao	chim	chin	cho	choa	chou	chouaon	choue	choui	choun	choum
fa	fam	fan	féou	fi	fo	foe	foi	fou	fouen	foum	guei	haï	ham
han	hao	he	hem	hen	heou	hi	hia	hiai	hiam	hiao	hie	hien	hieou
him	hin	hio	hiu	hiuè	hieuen	hioum	hiun	ho	hao	hoai	hoam	hoan	hoé
hoei	hoen	hou	houm	houon	y	ya	yai	yam	ïao	ïe	ïen	ïeou	im
in	ïo	iu	ïué	ïuen	ïum	ïun	ke	kem	ken	keou	ki	kia	kiao
kié	kien	kïeou	kim	kin	kio	kiu	kiue	kieuen	kioum	kiun	la	laï	lam
lan	lao	le	leam	leao	lem	leou	lh	li	lié	lien	lieou	lim	lin
lio	liu	lo	lou	loui	loum	louan	louon	lun	ma	maï	mam	man	mao
mau	me	mem	men	meou	mi	miao	mié	mien	mim	min	mo	mou	mouen
moui	moum	mouon	na	naï	nam	nan	nao	nem	ngaï	ngan	ngao	nguè	nguén
ngeou	ngo	ni	niam	niau	niao	ni	nien	nieou	nio	nim	niu	no	nou
noui	noum	nouon	nun	o, ou	pa	paï	pam	pan	pao	pe	peou	pi	piao
pïé	pien	pim	pin	po	poi	pou	pouen	poum	pouon	qua	quouè	quouai	quouam
quouï	quouen	qouo	quouon	ſa	ſaï	ſam	ſan	ſao	ſé	ſem	ſen	ſeou	ſi
ſiam	ſiao	ſié	ſien	ſiéou	ſim	ſin	ſio	ſiou	ſiuè	ſiuen	ſiun	ſo	ſou
ſiu	ſ ui	ſu	ſoum	ſun	ſouon	ta	taï	tam	tan	tao	te	tem	teou
ti	tiao	tie	tien	tieou	tim	to	tou	touï	toum	tun	touon	tſa	tſaï
tſam	tſan	tſao	tſe	tſem	tſéou	tſi	tſiam	tſiao	tſié	tſien	tſieou	tſim	tſin
tſio	tſiu	tſiuè	tſiuen	tſioum	tſiou	tſo	tſou	tſu	tſui	tſoum	tſun	tſouon	tcha
tchaï	tcham	thcan	tchao	tché	tchen	tcheou	tchi	tchim	tchin	tcho	tchoua	tchouam	tchu
tchoua	tchouen	tchouè	tchoum	tchun	ua	vaï	vai	vam	van	ven	ve	vi	vo
von	vou	voum	328.										
		oum											

Place this between 176 and 177.

on of the voice hath divers ſignifications; ſo that the Chineſe language, when it is ſpoken exactly, is a kind of muſick, and contains a real harmony, which compoſeth the eſſence and particular character of it.

There are five tones that are applied to each word, according to the ſenſe one means to give it. The firſt is an uniform pronunciation without lightening or falling the voice, as if one ſhould continue for ſome time the firſt note of our muſick; the ſecond raiſeth the voice notably higher; the third is very acute; in the fourth you deſcend all on a ſudden to a grave tone; in the fifth you paſs to a more deep note, if I may preſume ſo to expreſs myſelf, by hollowing and framing a kind of baſe. It is very hard to explain my meaning herein any other way than by the language itſelf.

However, you already ſee, my lord, that, by this diverſity of pronunciation, 333 words are made 1665; beſides, one may pronounce ſmoothly, or aſperate each word, which is very uſual, and does ſtill increaſe the language by half. Sometimes theſe monoſyllables are joined together, as we put our letters together, thereby to compoſe different words: Nay, they do more than all that, for ſometimes a whole phraſe, according as it follows or goes before another, hath a quite different ſenſe; ſo it plainly appears, that this tongue, ſo poor, ſo ſeemingly barren, yet for all that, is indeed very rich and copious in furniſhing us with variety of words.

But theſe riches coſt foreigners dear to come by them, and I cannot tell whether ſome miſſionaries had not better have laboured in the mines than to have applied themſelves for ſeveral years to this labour, one of the hardeſt and moſt diſcouraging that one can experience in matter of ſtudy. I cannot apprehend how any one can have other thoughts; and I muſt confeſs I admir'd to read the new relation of father Magalhen, that the Chineſe language is eaſier than the Greek, Latin, and all the languages in Europe. He adds, one cannot doubt of it, if it be conſidered, that the difficulty in tongues proceeds from the memory; now, one hath no trouble at all in this, that hath but very few words in compariſon of others, nay, and may be learn'd in a day's time.

To argue as this father does, muſick muſt coſt us but an hour's time, ſeven words and ſeven tones do not much burthen the memory, and, if one have but a voice never ſo little flexible, one would think it were no hard matter to learn them; nevertheleſs, we ſee by daily experience, whoſo begins at thirty or forty years, unleſs he have a more than ordinary inclination for muſick, ſcarce ever learns it to purpoſe; nay, and after much application and long exerciſe, is ſtill, to his dying day, but a pitiful muſician. How will it fare with a perſon who hath ſix tones to combine with above 300 words, that he does not know by the writing, which he muſt call to mind extempore, when he would ſpeak fluently, or when he is to diſtinguiſh in another perſon that precipitates his words, and who ſcarce obſerves the accent and particular tone of each word?

It is not the memory that is put to a ſtreſs upon this occaſion, but the imagination and ear, which in ſome certain perſons never diſtinguiſh one tone from another; the turn of the tongue alſo conduces infinitely thereto; and there are certain perſons that have memory ſufficient to learn a book in a few days, who will tug at it for a month together to pronounce only one word, and all to no purpoſe: How happens it, that, let him take what care he will, a man has never a good accent in our language, when he is born in certain provinces, if he lives in them till he is grown up.

Nevertheleſs, to make yourſelf underſtood in Chineſe, you muſt give each word its peculiar accent;

cent; vary but never ſo little, and you fall into another tone that makes a ridiculous counter-ſenſe; thus, if you have not a care, you may call a man Beaſt, when you mean to call him Sir, becauſe the word, that is common to them both, hath a different ſenſe, only by the different tone they give it: ſo that it is properly in this language, that one may ſay, the tone is all in all.

This is that alſo that makes the Chineſe tongue more difficult than others. When a ſtranger that hath but a ſmattering intends to ſpeak French, if he pronounces ſome words but never ſo little well, we eaſily gueſs at thoſe he ſpeaks ill, and we know his meaning; but in China, one ſingle word, badly pronounced, is enough to render the whole phraſe unintelligible; and one phraſe at the beginning, that is not well heard and underſtood, hinders the underſtanding of what follows. So when one chances to come into a congregation, where they have already begun to ſpeak about ſome buſineſs, one ſtares about a good while without underſtanding, till ſuch time as by degrees they put him in the way, and till he gets hold of the thread of the diſcourſe.

Beſides what I have been ſaying, this tongue hath particular characters that diſtinguiſh it from all others. Firſt of all, they do not ſpeak as they write, and the moſt quaint diſcourſe is barbarous, harſh, and unpleaſant when printed. If you would write well, you muſt uſe more proper terms, more noble expreſſions, more particular turns, than do occur in common diſcourſe, and which are proper only for writing, the ſtile of which is more different from the common elocution, than our obſcureſt Latin poets are from the ſmootheſt and moſt natural proſe.

Secondly, eloquence does not conſiſt in a certain diſpoſition of periods, ſuch as orators affect, who, to impoſe upon the auditors, ſtuff it ſometimes only with words, becauſe they have but few things to tell them. The Chineſe are eloquent by their lively expreſſions, noble metaphors, bold and ſuccinct compariſons, and above all, by abundance of ſentences and paſſages taken from the ancients, which amongſt them are of great moment: They deliver a great many things in a few words, their ſtile is cloſe and myſterious, obſcure and not continued, they ſeldom make uſe of thoſe particles that illuſtrate and connect our diſcourſe. They ſeem ſometimes to ſpeak not to be underſtood, oftentimes they expect you ſhould underſtand ſeveral things, altho' they do not mention them; ſo much ſenſe and thought do they incloſe in few words!

It is true, this obſcurity almoſt quite vaniſhes in reſpect of thoſe who have a perfect knowledge in the characters; and a learned man, that reads a work, is ſeldom miſtaken in it, but in ſpeaking, one is often at a ſtand: and I have convers'd with ſome doctors, who, to underſtand one another in familiar diſcourſes, were obliged to deſcribe with their finger in the air the particular letter that expreſs'd their words, whoſe ſenſe could not be determined by the pronunciation.

Thirdly, the ſound of words is pretty pleaſing to the ear, eſpecially in the province of Nankim, where the accent is more correct than in any other part; for there, many pronounce the different tones ſo fine and delicately, that a ſtranger hath much ado to perceive it. Beſides, they never uſe R, which contributes not a little to mollify that language; yet muſt it be allowed, that moſt part of the Chineſe that pretend to ſpeak correctly, ſpeak very unmuſically, they drawl out their words intolerably; and tho' they be all monoſyllables, yet by meer extending them, they make words infinite and like to intire phraſes.

They have moreover a termination which often occurs, which we expreſs commonly by a double ll;

the ſound comes from the bottom of the *aſpera arteria*, ſo uncouth and unnatural, that that alone is capable of ſpoiling a language: but as certain forced aſperations in the Caſtilian tongue do notwithſtanding pleaſe the Spaniards, ſo the Chineſe are perſuaded that theſe ſame gutturals that diſpleaſe us are a real grace; and that theſe more maſculine and ſtronger tones give a body to their language, without which it would be apt to degenerate into an effeminate ſoftneſs, which would at beſt have no grace but in the mouths of women and children.

Fourthly, they want abundance of ſounds which we expreſs by our letters; for example, they do not pronounce *A*, *b*, *d*, *o*, *r*, *x*, *z*, after the ſame manner as we do in France; and when any one forces them to pronounce them, they always make ſome alteration, and uſe ſounds that in their language come the neareſt to them, never being able almoſt to expreſs them exactly; which proved formerly a great difficulty for the Chineſe prieſts in conſecrating the hoſt, who could not ſay maſs in Latin without falling into a ridiculous jargon. Yet there was ſo much pains taken to frame their tongue, that at length they have ſucceeded to admiration; ſo that the Latin in their mouths is not much more different from that of the Portugueſe, than that of the Portugueſe is from ours.

All that I have been ſaying, my lord, is to be underſtood of the Mandarine language, that is current all over the empire, which is univerſally underſtood every where; for the common people at Fokien, beſides that, ſpeak a particular tongue, that hath no affinity with the ſame, who look upon it in China, as we do upon the Biſcay language, or Baſbetron in France.

What relates to the China character is no leſs ſingular than their tongue; they have not any alphabet as we have, that contains the elements, and, as it were, the principles of the words; nay, they cannot ſo much as comprehend how we are able, with ſo ſmall a number of figures, each of which ſignifies nothing, to expreſs upon a piece of paper all our conceptions, to compoſe ſuch an infinite number of books, as to ſtock whole libraries. This art of putting letters together, to compoſe words of them, to combine them both into a prodigious number of ſenſes, is to them a hidden myſtery; and that, which is ſo common amongſt other nations, never obtained amongſt them, either thro' the little converſe they have had with other neighbouring nations, or thro' the ſmall account they made of foreign inventions.

Inſtead of characters, at the beginning of their monarchy, they us'd hieroglyphicks; they painted rather than wrote; and by the natural images of things, which they drew upon paper, they endeavour'd to expreſs and convey their ideas to others; ſo that to write a bird, they painted its figure, and to ſignify a foreſt, they repreſented a great company of trees; a circle ſignified the ſun, and a creſcent the moon.

This ſort of writing was not only imperfect, but very inconvenient; for beſides that one expreſs'd his thoughts but by halves, even thoſe few, that were expreſs'd, were never perfectly conceived, and it was, beſides, utterly impoſſible to avoid miſtakes: moreover, there needed whole volumes to expreſs a few things, becauſe the painting took up a great deal of room; inſomuch, that the Chineſe by little and little changed their writing, and compoſed more ſimple figures, tho' leſs natural: They likewiſe invented many to expreſs ſome things that painting could not repreſent, as the voice, ſmell, ſenſes, conceptions, paſſions, and a thouſand other objects that have neither body nor figure; of ſeveral ſimple draughts they after made compound ones, and at this rate they multiplied their characters *ad infinitum*, becauſe they deſtined one or more of them for each particular word.

This abundance of letters is, in my opinion, the ſource of the Chineſe ignorance, becauſe they imploy all their days in this ſtudy, and have no leiſure ſo much as to think of other ſciences, fancying themſelves learned enough if they can but read. However, they are far from underſtanding all their letters: it is very much, if, after ſeveral years indefatigable ſtudy, they are able to underſtand fifteen or twenty thouſand. The vulgar ſort of the learned content themſelves with leſs; and I cannot believe, that there was ever any doctor that underſtood the third part, for they reckon upwards of twenty-four thouſand.

As for ſtrangers, it is ſcarce credible how much this ſtudy diſguſts them; it is an heavy croſs to be forced all a man's life long (for commonly it is not too long for it) to ſtuff his head with this horrible multitude of figures, and to be always occupied in decyphering imperfect hieroglyphicks, that have in a manner no analogy with the things they ſignify; there is not the leaſt charm in this, as in the ſciences of Europe, which, in fatiguing, do not ceaſe to recompence the weary mind with delight. It is neceſſary in China, that a man may not be diſcouraged, to ſeek out more ſublime motives, to excite this tired inclination; to make a virtue of neceſſity, and to pleaſe one's ſelf to think, that this ſtudy, how crabbed and ingrateful ſoever it ſeems, is not ſterile, becauſe it is a ſure way to bring men to the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

It is that way whereby we make ourſelves underſtood by the learned; whereby we inſinuate ourſelves into their ſpirits, and thereby prepare them for the great truths of the chriſtian religion; there is not that perſon, whom this hope of preaching the goſpel ſucceſsfully does not incourage and inſpirit. We cannot alſo doubt, but that our bleſſed Lord may accompany the effects of our good will, with a particular bleſſing ; and it is more than probable, that, if it had not been for the aſſiſtance from above, the miſſionaries would never have been ſo great proficients, as to make ſuch a progreſs that has aſtoniſhed the ableſt doctors of the empire.

Amongſt theſe characters, there are ſome of divers ſorts. The firſt are almoſt out of uſe, and they preſerve them only out of veneration to antiquity. The ſecond, not ſo ancient by far, take place only in publick inſcriptions ; when there is occaſion for them, they conſult books, and, by the help of a dictionary, it is eaſy to decypher them. The third, much more regular and fair, ſerve for the impreſſion, and alſo for the ordinary writing ; nevertheleſs, the ſtrokes and draughts of them being very exact and curious, there needs a conſiderable time to write them. And for that reaſon, they have contrived a fourth kind of writing, the ſtrokes whereof being more joined, and leſs diſtinguiſh'd one from another, facilitate the writing faſter ; for that reaſon, they are called Voluble Letters : Theſe three laſt characters do much reſemble one another, and do anſwer to our capital letters, to the printed letters, and ordinary writing.

Inſtead of a pen, they uſe a pencil, held in the hand, not obliquely, as our painters, but directly, as if the paper were to be prick'd. The Chineſe always write from top to bottom, and begin their firſt letter where ours end ; ſo that, to read their books, the laſt page muſt firſt be ſought for, which with them is the beginning : Their paper being very thin and almoſt tranſparent, they are fain to double it, for fear leſt the letters do run into one another when they write on the backſide : but theſe doubled leaves are ſo even, that one can hardly perceive it.

To write a bad hand was never in China, as formerly in France, a ſign of nobility ; every body is ambitious to write fair ; and, before one ſtands candidate to be admitted to the firſt degree of learning, he muſt give a ſpecimen of his fair hand. A letter ill cut in a compoſition, in a work, in a petition, is a conſiderable fault; and becauſe one ſtroke often alters the whole ſenſe, there needs no more to make one, upon examination, to loſe the degree of doctor, and conſequently to ruin his fortune. So that all the Mandarines write fair, and the emperor excels in that, as in all other things.

Printing, which is but an art in its infancy in Europe, hath been, from all antiquity, in uſe in China; however it is ſomething different from ours; as we have but few letters, from which we can compoſe huge volumes, by putting them together, few characters ſuffice, becauſe thoſe that have ſerved for the firſt leaf are ſtill employed for all the others. The prodigious number of China characters hinder you from uſing this way, except only in ſome reſtrictions that concern the palace, and title pages, into which few letters can come in: on all other occaſions they find it more eaſy to engrave their letters upon wooden boards, and the charge is much leſs.

This is the way they go to work. He, who intends to print a book, gets it fair written over by a maſter ſcribe, the engraver glews each leaf upon an even ſmooth table, and then the draughts with the graving tool are done ſo exactly, that the characters have a perfect reſemblance with the original; ſo that the impreſſion is good or bad, according as a good or bad ſcribe hath been employed; this ſkill of the gravers is ſo great, that one cannot diſtinguiſh that which is imprinted from what was written by the hand, when they have made uſe of the ſame paper and ink.

It muſt be confeſs'd that this ſort of printing is ſomewhat incommodious, inaſmuch as the boards muſt be multiplied as much as the leaves, ſo that an indifferent big chamber will not ſuffice to contain all the little tables, that ſerved for the impreſſion of a large volume; yet when the engraving is finiſh'd, one is not obliged at the ſame time to draw off all the copies, by running a venture of not ſelling above half, and ruin his eſtate by a needleſs charge. The Chineſe print their leaves, according as they put them off; and the wooden plates, which they eaſily run over again, after they have drawn off two or three hundred copies, ſerve for many other different impreſſions. Beſides that, they have no occaſion for a corrector of the preſs; for, provided that the leaf be exactly written, it is very rare that the engraver makes any faults, which is none of the leaſt advantages.

The paper of China ſeems ſo fine, that they imagined in France that it was of ſilk, or cotton; but cotton is not ſo proper for that purpoſe as people imagine; and the artificers have aſſured me, that the little threads of ſilk cannot be beat ſmall enough to compoſe an uniform paſte, ſuch as is requiſite for the leaves. All the China paper is made of the bark, or inward rhind of Bambou; it is a tree more even, thicker, ſtraiter, and ſtronger than the elder; they throw away the firſt rhind, as too hard and thick; the undermoſt, as being whiter, ſofter, pounded with fair water, ſerves for the matter whereof they compoſe paper, which they take up with frames or moulds, as long and broad as they think fit, as we do here: there are leaves of ten and twelve feet long; and the paper of the leaves is as white, and much more even and ſmoother than ours.

Inſtead of glew they paſs alom upon it, which does not only hinder it from ſinking, but renders it alſo ſo ſhining, that it appears as waſh'd over with ſilver, or impregnated with varniſh: it is extremely ſmooth under the pen, but eſpecially under the pencil, that requires an even ground; for if it be rugged and knotty, like our paper, the little threads ſeparate, and the letters are never well terminated.

Yet for all that the China paper is not laſting, it is ſubject to fret; any moiſture or duſt ſticks to it; and, by reaſon of its being made of the bark of a tree, worms infallibly breed in it, if care be not taken to beat the books now and then, and expoſe them to the ſun; ſo that they cannot preſerve in China, as we do in Europe, ancient manuſcripts; and they continually renew the libraries, which are therefore only ancient, becauſe they conſiſt of authentick copies of ancient originals.

Since I have told your grace all things that concern the books and printings of China, I hope you will not take it amiſs if I ſpeak a word or two concerning the particular quality of their ink: It is moſt excellent, and they have hitherto vainly tried in France to imitate it; that of Nankim is moſt ſet by; and there be ſticks made of it ſo very curious, and of ſuch a ſweet ſcent, that one would be tempted to keep ſome of them tho' they ſhould be of no uſe at all.

I ſay ſticks of ink, for it is not a liquor like ours; it is ſolid, and reſembles our mineral colours, tho' lighter by far; they make it into all figures; the more uſual are four-ſquare, but not ſo broad as long, about half an inch thick. There are ſome of them gilded with figures of dragons, birds, and flowers; they contrive for that purpoſe pretty moulds of wood ſo curiouſly wrought, that one would have much ado to make any thing more compleat upon metal.

When one has a mind to write, they have a little poliſh'd marble upon the table, made hollow at the end, proper to hold water; they infuſe one end of the ſtick therein, which they rub gently upon the ſmooth part of the marble; and in a moment, according as they rub, there is produced a liquor, more or leſs black, wherein they dip the point of the pencil to write with. This ink is ſhining, extremely black, and altho' it ſinks when the paper is ſo fine, yet does it never extend further than the pencil; ſo that the letters are exactly terminated, how groſs ſoever the ſtrokes be.

It hath moreover another quality, that makes it admirable good for deſigning, that is, it admits of all the diminutions one can give it; and there are many things that cannot be repreſented to the life, without uſing this colour. In a word, it is not ſo difficult to be made as people imagine; altho' the Chineſe uſe lamp-black, drawn from divers matters, yet the beſt is made of hogs greaſe, burnt in a lamp; they mix a ſort of oil with it, to make it ſweeter, and pleaſant odours, to ſuppreſs the ill ſmell of the greaſe and oil. After having reduced it to a conſiſtence, they make of the paſte little lozenges, which they caſt in a mould; it is at firſt very heavy, but when it is very hard, it is not ſo weighty by half, and that, which they give for a pound, weighs not above eight or ten ounces.

The binding of books in China is likewiſe very pretty and curious, tho' it comes much ſhort of ours; they don't gild upon the edges, nor ſo much as colour them. The ordinary books are covered with a grey paſteboard, handſome enough. They bind others according as they pleaſe; in a fine ſattin, or a kind of flower'd taffaty, that is very cheap, and is commonly made on purpoſe for this uſe. I have ſeen ſome covered with rich ſilk, flower'd with gold and ſilver; the form is always the ſame, but they are at coſt, according to the matter they are willing to employ. I ſhould never have preſumed, my lord, to take the liberty to ſet down all theſe minute circumſtances, if I were not perſuaded, that a little account is not always diſagreeable to learned men, who, like you, are acquainted beforehand with the moſt eſſential matters. But I now preſent you with ſomething more ſolid, which, without doubt, you may have read; but I add it in this place briefly, only to refreſh your memory.

The firſt hiſtory, that was in the world, was, without all controverſy, the book of Geneſis; but it muſt be granted, that, of all the books that have reached our knowledge, thoſe of China are the firſt that have been publiſhed: they name them by way of excellence, The Five Volumes; and the Chineſe hold nothing more ſacred than the doctrine therein taught. It is about four thouſand three hundred years ſince the emperor Hoamti, after he had invented the characters, compoſed treaties of aſtronomy, arithmetick, and medicine.

Near upon three hundred years after, they made a collection of all the ordinances, and writ the hiſtory of king Yao, a prince recommendable for his piety, prudence, and the mighty care he took to eſtabliſh a model of government in the ſtate. Chun and Iſu, his ſucceſſors, were no leſs famous; they regulated the ceremonies of the ſacrifices, that they were bound to offer to the ſupreme Maſter of heaven, and to the inferior ſpirits that preſided over rivers and mountains; they divided the empire into provinces; they fix'd their different ſituation, with reſpect to the conſtellations of heaven; they regulated the taxes that the people were to pay; they made ſeveral other conſtitutions very wholeſome and proper for introducing good manners, and very neceſſary for the publick quiet. All theſe things were written; and whatever, theſe three emperors have left behind them to poſterity, hath been always conſidered by the Chineſe as oracles.

Nevertheleſs, becauſe ſome things ever eſcape the notice of the firſt laws, the emperors who reigned a thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeventy ſix years before our Saviour, upon mature deliberation, and by the prudent counſel and advice of their miniſters, thought themſelves obliged to make an addition of new ones. They report that Caotſon, a prince, in whom piety and zeal in religion did infinitely inhance the noble qualities he had received from nature, ſaw in a dream the figure of a man coming from heaven: after he awoke, the image remained ſo lively engraven upon his mind, that he cauſed him to be ſought for, and found him at length amongſt the maſons. So ſoon as this man apply'd himſelf to the government, he ſeemed to be inſpired, and made ſeveral beneficial regulations, that perfected the ancient ordinances, which were again augmented under ſucceeding reigns; inſomuch that, being all collected together, there was a book compoſed of them which the Chineſe call * Chu-kim, which amongſt them is of as great authority, in reference to the politick ſtate, as Moſes and the prophets are amongſt the Jews, as to what concerns the worſhip of God, and form of religion.

The ſecond book, which the Chineſe reverence for its antiquity, is a long continuation and ſeries of odes and poems, compoſed under the reigns of the third race †: where are deſcribed the manners and cuſtoms of the petty kings of China, who govern'd the provinces under the emperor's juriſdiction. Confucius mentions them with great marks of reſpect; which makes us incline to judge, that in proceſs of time they had been corrupted by a mixture of ſeveral bad pieces, ſince ſeveral things are found in them very ridiculous, not to ſay impious. Fohi, founder of the monarchy, compoſed before that time poems of this nature; but they were ſo obſcure, that what care ſoever they took to put a good conſtruction on them, yet have they been forced to confeſs that they were not intelligible. This obſcurity, ſo unfathomable to the moſt learned heads, hath

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* The firſt book called *Chu-kim.*

† The ſecond book *Chi-kim.*

hath given occaſion to many ſuperſtitions. The Bonzes wreſt them to a wrong uſe, and make them ſay what they pleaſe; they are to them an inexhauſtible fountain of fables and chimeras, which they make uſe of, to cauſe the people to pin their faith upon their ſleeve. However, they have compiled a * tome of them, which holds the third rank amongſt claſſick authors.

The † fourth contains the hiſtory of ſeveral princes, their virtues, vices, and maxims of the government, that have been collected by Confucius, and commented upon by his diſciples.

The ‖ fifth treats of cuſtoms and ceremonies. There is mention made of temples, ſacred veſſels; of the duty of children to their parents, and wives to their huſbands; rules of real friendſhip, civilities at feaſts; of hoſpitality, muſick, war; of funeral honours, and of a thouſand other things that regard ſociety.

Theſe five books are very ancient, and all the others, that have any authority in the empire, are nothing but copies, or interpretations of them. Amongſt abundance of authors who have taken pains about theſe ſo famous originals, none is ſo conſpicuous and eminent as Confucius; they have a great eſteem, eſpecially for that which he compiled in four books, upon the ancient laws, which are look'd upon as the rule of perfect government. There he treats of the great art of reigning, of mediocrity, virtues, and vices, of the nature of things, and of common duties. This laſt tome, notwithſtanding, is not ſo much the work of Confucius, as of Mencius his diſciple, whoſe life was leſs regular than that of his maſter, but his ſtile more eloquent and pleaſant.

Beſides

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* The third book *U-kim.*

† The fourth *Tchun-tſiou.*

‖ The fifth *Li-ki.*

Beſides theſe nine books, there be ſome others much in vogue, as the univerſal hiſtory of the empire, the truth of which is no leſs confirmed in China, than it is in our moſt noted hiſtories in Europe. The books that treat of the education of children, of obedience, of loyalty, are aſcribed to Confucius. You have ſome which diſcourſe of medicine, agriculture, plants, of the military art, of arts liberal and mechanick, of particular hiſtories, aſtronomy, philoſophy, and a great many other parts of mathematicks. In ſhort, they have their romances, comedies, and, what I place in the ſame rank, an abundance of treatiſes compoſed by the Bonzes, concerning the worſhip of the deities of the country, which they alter, diminiſh, and increaſe, according as they find it neceſſary to inveigle the people, and ſwell their revenues.

Of all theſe books they have compiled numerous libraries, ſome whereof were compoſed of above forty thouſand volumes; but all theſe brave works that antiquity took ſo much pains to bring forth, which private perſons had amaſſed with ſo vaſt expences, were well-nigh all deſtroyed by the tyrannical order of one emperor. Three hundred years, or thereabouts, after the death of Confucius, that is to ſay, two hundred years before the birth of our Saviour, the emperor Chihoamti, illuſtrious by his valour and military ſcience, of which he was maſter beyond all his predeceſſors, and ſtill more famous for the prodigious wall he cauſed to be built, to ſecure his territories from the interruptions of the Tartars, reſolved to extirpate all ſciences; and not ſatisfied with putting a great number of doctors to death, he ordered his ſubjects, upon pain of death, to ſet fire on all the books in the empire, except thoſe that treated on agriculture, medicine, and ſorcery.

This conflagration, the moſt remarkable that ever the republick of letters ſuffered, had like to have utterly ruined the empire, and would in time have turned the moſt polite and accompliſhed ſtate, into the moſt barbarous and ignorant kingdom in the world, if, after the tyrant's death, the love of ſciences, that began to revive in all mens breaſts, had not in ſome meaſure repaired this loſs.

The old men, who according to cuſtom had, during their youth, learned almoſt all theſe books by heart, received orders to write them faithfully over: They found ſome of them in the tombs, that the moſt zealous had concealed, to which they gave a reſurrection, by publiſhing them in another edition. Some of them they fetch'd from the graves, and holes of walls, that indeed ſuffered great damage by moiſture and worms; however, very ſerviceable to thoſe who laboured after their reſtoration, for what was defaced in ſome was intire in others.

All this care did not keep the new edition from defects; there remain in ſome places ſeveral breaks; and there have been inſerted into others ſome pieces by the bye, that were not in the originals. The Chineſe themſelves take notice of theſe faults, and of ſome others of leſs moment; but they are ſo ſuperſtitious in preſerving what was handed down to them from antiquity, that they pay reverence even to its faults.

I ſhould not, my lord, afford you a light diffuſive enough into the Chineſe literature, ſhould I not ſpeak more particularly of Confucius, who makes the principal ornament of it. He is the moſt pure ſource of their doctrine; he is their philoſopher, their law giver, their oracle; and, albeit he was never king, one may nevertheleſs avouch, that, during his life, he governed a great part of China, and that he hath had, ſince his death, a greater ſhare than any one in the adminiſtration of the affairs of ſtate, by the maxims that he had promulgated, and the fair examples that he had exhibited; ſo that he is ſtill the model of all honeſt men: his life hath been writ by ſeveral perſons: I ſhall report what they commonly ſay of it.

Confucius, whom the Chineſe name Coum-tſe, was born in the province of Quamtum, the thirty-ſeventh year of the reign of the emperor Kim, four hundred fourſcore and three years before the incarnation of our Saviour; the death of his father, that preceded his birth, made them call him Tceſſe, which ſignifies Child of Sorrow; he derived his pedigree from Tiny, twenty-ſeventh emperor of the ſecond race: how illuſtrious ſoever this family might be by a long ſeries of kings, it became much more ſo by the life of this great man: He eclipſed all his anceſtors, but he gave his poſterity a luſtre that ſtill continues, after more than two thouſand years. China acknowledges no true nobility but in this family, mightily reſpected by ſovereigns, who have derived from thence, as from the ſource, the laws of perfect government, and no leſs beloved by the people, to whoſe happineſs he hath ſo ſucceſsfully contributed.

Confucius did not proceed by the ordinary degrees of childhood, he ſeemed rational a great deal ſooner than other men; for he took delight in nothing that other children are fond of: Playing, going abroad, amuſements proper to his age, did not at all concern him; he had a grave, a ſerious deportment, that gained him reſpect, and was, at that very time, a preſage of what one day he was like to be: but that, which diſtinguiſheth him the moſt, was his exemplary and unbiaſſed piety. He honoured his relations; he endeavoured in all things to imitate his grandfather, who lived then in China, reſpected and admired by all for his exemplary ſanctity; and it was obſervable, that he never eat any thing but he proſtrated himſelf upon the ground, and offered it to the ſupreme Lord of heaven.

When he was a child, hearing his grandfather fetch a deep ſigh, he came up to him, and when he had ſaluted him, bowing ſeveral times to the very ground, *May I be ſo bold*, ſays he, *without injuring the reſpect I owe you, to ask you the occaſion of your grief? Perhaps, you are afraid that your poſterity may neglect the care of virtue, and diſhonour you by their vice. What put this thought into your head?* ſays Coum-tſe to him, *and where have you learned to ſpeak after this manner? From yourſelf*, reply'd Confucius; *I attentively hear you every time you ſpeak, and I have often heard you ſay, that a ſon, who by his manner of living does not keep up to the reputation of his anceſtors, degenerates from them, and does not deſerve to bear their name. When you ſpoke after that manner, did not you think of me? and might not that be the thing that troubles you?* This good old man was overjoy'd at this diſcourſe, and after that ſeemed not to be diſquieted.

Confucius, after his grandfather's death, was a conſtant adherer to Tcem-ſe, a famous doctor of thoſe times; and, under the conduct of ſo great a maſter, he became in a ſhort time a mighty proficient in the knowledge of antiquity, which he look'd upon, even then, as the moſt perfect model. This love for the ancients had like one day to have coſt him his life, tho' he was then but ſixteen years of age: for, diſcourſing with a perſon of the higheſt quality, who ſpoke of the obſcurity and unprofitableneſs of the Chineſe books, this child read him ſomewhat too ſevere a lecture concerning the reſpect that is due to them.

The books you ſpeak of, ſays Confucius, *contain profound doctrine, the ſenſe of which ought not to be underſtood but by the learned: the people would undervalue them, could they comprehend them of themſelves. This dependence of judgments, by which the* *ſtupid are ſubject to the learned, is very profitable, and uſeful in human ſociety: were all families equally rich, and equally powerful, there would remain no form of government: but there would happen yet a more ſtrange diſorder, if men were equally knowing, every one would be for governing, and nobody would believe himſelf obliged to obey.*

Some time ago, added this witty child, *one of the vulgar ſpoke to me as you do, I did not wonder at it*; *but I admire at preſent, that a doctor, as you are, ſhould ſpeak to me like this man of the dregs of the people.* This diſcourſe, one would think, ſhould gain the affection and reſpect of the Mandarine: but confuſion, that poſſeſs'd him to be thus gravelled by a child, did ſo nettle him, that he reſolved to be revenged. He cauſed his houſe to be inveſted by his menial ſervants, and, without doubt, he would have committed ſome violence, had not the king, who had notice of it, given him orders to withdraw.

When Confucius was a little more advanced in years, he made a collection of the moſt excellent maxims of the ancients, which he intended to follow, and inſpire into the people. Each province was at that time a diſtinct kingdom, which a prince, in ſubjection to the emperor, governed by particular laws: he levied taxes, diſpoſed of all places of truſt, and made peace as he judged expedient. Theſe petty kings had ſometimes differences among them; the emperor himſelf ſtood in fear of them; and had not always authority enough to make himſelf be obey'd by them.

Confucius being perſuaded that the people would never be happy, ſo long as intereſt, ambition, and falſe policy ſhould reign in all theſe petty courts, reſolved to preach up a ſevere morality, to prevail upon men to contemn riches and worldly pleaſures, and eſteem temperance, juſtice, and other virtues;

to inſpire them with grandeur and magnanimity, proof againſt all the temptations of this life, a ſincerity incapable of the leaſt diſguiſe, even in reſpect of the greateſt princes ; in fine, to teach them a kind of life that ſhould oppoſe the paſſions, and ſhould intirely cultivate reaſon and virtue.

That which is moſt to be admired is, That he preached more by his example than by his words ; ſo that he every where reaped very conſiderable fruit from his labours. Kings were governed by his counſels, the people reverenced him as a ſaint ; every body commended him, and even thoſe, who could not be brought to imitate his actions, did nevertheleſs admire them : but ſometimes he took upon him ſuch a ſeverity, as his greateſt friends and admirers could never comply with.

Being choſen to fill a conſiderable place of truſt in the kingdom of Lou, inleſs than three months time, after he exerciſed the charge, he introduced ſuch a prodigious change, that the court and provinces were quite another thing than they were before. The neighbouring princes began to be jealous ; they perceived, that a king, ruled by a man of this character, would quickly render himſelf too powerful, ſince nothing is more conducive to make a ſtate flouriſh than order, and an exact obſervance of laws. The king of Tci aſſembled his miniſters, and propounded to them an expedient to put a ſtop to the cariere of this new government : after a long deliberation, this was the expedient they bethought themſelves of.

They choſe a great company of young maids, handſome, well educated, and perfecty well inſtructed in whatſoever might pleaſe. Then, under pretence of an ambaſſy, they preſented them to the king of Lou, and to the principal officers of his court ; the preſent was joyfully accepted, and obtained its deſired effect ; they thought of nothing but of diverting the fair ſtrangers ;

for ſeveral months together there was nothing but feaſting, dancing, and comedies, and pleaſure was the only buſineſs of the court.

Confucius, perceiving that the publick affairs would ſuffer by it, endeavoured to bring men to themſelves again; but this new kind of life had ſo charmed them, that all his endeavours proved ineffectual: there was no remedy, the ſeverity of the philoſopher, whether he would or no, muſt give place to the gallantry and irregularities of courtiers. So that he thought it did not ſtand with his reputation to remain any longer in a place where reaſon was not liſtened to, and he reſigned up his place to the prince, and ſought other kingdoms more inclinable to follow his maxims.

But he met with great obſtacles, and run from province to province, almoſt without reaping any advantage; becauſe the politicians dreaded him, and the miniſters of princes had no mind to have a competitor, who was able to leſſen their authority, or deprive them of their credit. So that, forſaken by all the world, he was often reduced to the utmoſt extremity, in danger of being ſtarved, or to loſe his life by the conſpiracy of miſchievous men. Nevertheleſs, all theſe diſgraces did not move him; and he would often ſay, *That the cauſe he defended was too good to apprehend any evil conſequences from it; that there was not that man ſo powerful, that could hurt him; and that, when a man is elevated to heaven by a ſincere deſire of perfection, he is ſo far from fearing a tempeſt, that he does not ſo much as hear the noiſe in this lower world.*

So that he was never weary of inſtructing thoſe who loved virtue. Amongſt a great company of diſciples that put themſelves under his tuition, he employ'd ſome to write a fair hand; others apply'd themſelves to argue exactly, and to deliver themſelves eloquently in publick. He would have others ſtudy to frame to themſelves a true idea of a good government: but he counſelled thoſe, for whom he had a more particular kindneſs, to govern themſelves well, to cultivate their minds by meditation, and to purify their hearts by virtue.

Human nature, would he often ſay, *came from Heaven to us moſt pure and perfect, in proceſs of time, ignorance, the paſſions and evil examples have corrupted it*; *all conſiſts in the re-inſtating it, and giving it its primitive beauty: and, that we may be perfect, we muſt re-aſcend to that point, from whence we have deſcended. Obey Heaven, and follow all the orders of him who governs it. Love your neighbour as yourſelf*; *never ſuffer your ſenſes to be the rule of your conduct, but hearken to reaſon in all things: it will inſtruct you to think well, to ſpeak diſcreetly, and to perform all your actions holily.* He ſent ſix hundred of his diſciples into different places of the empire, to reform the manners of the people; and not ſatisfy'd to benefit his own country, he often took a reſolution to paſs the ſeas, and extend his doctrine to the extremity of the univerſe. There is ſcarce any thing can be added either to his zeal, or to the purity of his morality, they were ſo ſuperlative. Methinks he ſometimes ſpeaks like a doctor of the new law, rather than like a man that was brought up in the corruption of the law of nature: and that, which perſuades me, that hypocriſy had no ſhare in what he ſaid, is, That his actions never bely'd his maxims. In fine, his gravity and mildneſs in the uſe of the world, his rigorous abſtinence (for he paſs'd for the ſobereſt man of the empire) his contempt of the good things of the world, that continual attention and watchfulneſs over his actions, and then (which we find not among the ſages of antiquity) his humility and modeſty would make a man apt to judge that he was not a meer philoſopher formed by reaſon, but a man inſpired by God for the reformation of this new world.

The Chineſe report, that he had frequently this ſaying in his mouth, *It is in the Weſt where the true ſaint is found:* and this ſentence was ſo imprinted upon the ſpirit of the learned, that, ſixty-five years after the birth of our Saviour, the emperor Mimti, touched with theſe words, and determined by the image of a man that appeared to him in a dream coming from the Weſt, ſent ambaſſadors that way, with ſtrict orders to continue their journey till they ſhould meet the ſaint whom Heaven had acquainted him with.

It was much about the ſame time that St. Thomas preached the chriſtian faith in the Indies; now, if theſe Mandarines had followed his orders, peradventure China might have received benefit from the preaching of this apoſtle. But the danger of the ſea, that they feared, made them ſtop at the firſt iſland, where they found the idol Fo, or Foe, who had corrupted the Indies ſeveral years before with his damnable doctrine: they learn'd the ſuperſtitions of the country, and, at their return, propagated idolatry and atheiſm in all the empire.

Confucius lived ſecretly three years, but ſpent the latter end of his days in ſorrow, in ſeeing the wickedneſs that reigned amongſt the people. He has been often heard to ſay, *The mountain is fallen, and an high edifice was deſtroyed*; to denote that the grand ſyſtem of perfection, that he had erected with ſo much care in all the realms, was as good as overthrown. *Kings*, ſaid he, one day, during his laſt ſickneſs, *do not follow my maxims; I do no good in the world, wherefore it is time I ſhould depart out of it.* At that very moment he fell into a lethargy that continued ſeven days, at the end of which, he gave up the ghoſt in the embraces of his diſciples.

He was lamented by the whole empire, that from that very time honoured him as a ſaint, and influenced poſterity with a veneration of him, which in all probability will never have an end but with the world. Kings have built palaces for him after his death in all the provinces, whither the learned at certain times go to pay him honours. There are to be ſeen in ſeveral places theſe titles of honour writ in large characters, *To the great Maſter. To the head Doctor. To the Saint. To him who taught Emperors and Kings.* However, which is very extraordinary, the Chineſe did never deify him; they, I ſay, who have given the quality of God, or, as they ſpeak, the quality of pure ſpirits to many Mandarines, much inferior to him; as if Heaven, that had given him birth for the reformation of manners, was unwilling that ſuch a well-ordered life, ſhould, after his death, adminiſter occaſion of ſuperſtition and idolatry.

They preſerve to this day in China mimicks that repreſent him to the life, and pretty well agree with what hiſtory hath left us concerning him. He was no handſome man; he had moreover upon his forehead a ſwelling, or a kind of wen, that disfigured him, which he made others often to take notice of to humble him; otherwiſe his ſtature was ſo comely and proportionable, his behaviour ſo grave, his voice ſo ſtrong and ſhrill, that if he ſpoke with never ſo little warmth, one could not chuſe but be affected, and hear him with reſpect: but the maxims of morality he hath ſcattered here and there in his works, or which his diſciples took care to collect, draw a much more lively and advantageous portraiture of his ſoul. There would need an intire volume to relate them all. I have taken the few following out of a book compoſed by one of the principal Mandarines of the empire, who rules at preſent in Pekin.

Maxim I.

Beauty is not to be deſired by a wiſe man.

Confucius, going to ſee the king of a province, found him with a lord his favourite who was mighty beautiful. The king, ſo ſoon as he ſaw him come in, ſaid to him ſmiling, *Confucius, if thy countenance could be changed, I would willingly give you all the beauty of this young courtier. Sir*, anſwered the philoſopher, *that is not the thing I wiſh; the exterior form of a man is of little uſe to the publick good. What do you deſire then*, ſaid the prince? *I deſire, my lord*, ſays he, *in all the members of the empire that juſt ſymmetry that makes up the beauty of the government, and keeps the body of the ſtate from deformity.*

Maxim II.

A man muſt keep within bounds, if he means to be happy.

So ſoon as he underſtood that his mother was dead, he came into his country to pay his laſt devoirs to her; he wept for her bitterly, and ſpent three days without eating, which was perhaps too much, yet a philoſopher of that country thought it not enough, who ſaid to Confucius: *As for me, I have been ſeven days without taking ſuſtenance, upon the death of my relations; and you, who are grandſon to a ſaint, on whom all the world caſts their eyes to ſee how you will imitate him, you have ſatisfied yourſelf with three days abſtinence.* Confucius anſwered him, *Ceremonies have been enjoined by the ancients to reſtrain the indiſcreet, and ſtir up the backward. It is our duty to be obedient to the laws, if we would not go aſtray; it is in this golden mean that wiſdom conſiſts. That you may never ſtray out of it, remember that virtue is not an exceſs, and that perfection hath its limits.*

Maxim III.

A man ought to change often, if he would be conſtant in wiſdom.

A perſon of quality ſaid one day to Confucius, *Your grandfather was never wanting in any duty of civility,*

civility, in reſpect of great perſons; nevertheleſs his doctrine, tho' holy, never obtained, or got footing: How do you imagine then that yours ſhould be followed, ſeeing you have a magiſterial gravity which is very rough to all men, and proceeds ſometimes to haughtineſs? This is not the way to be welcome at princes courts. Every age hath its ways, anſwered Confucius, *in my grandfather's time princes and officers were polite; they delighted in order, every one kept his ſtation; to inſinuate a man's ſelf in their affections, it behoved a man to be polite, and regular, like them. At this day men value nothing but courage and haughtineſs, wherewith princes endeavour to inſpire their officers; a man ought to change with the world, that he may be in a capacity to win it:* A wiſe man would ceaſe ſo to be, ſhould he always act as the wiſe men of former times acted.

Maxim IV.

The nobility are not always the greateſt men in the kingdom.

Confucius, coming to the court of one of the kings of China, was very well received. This prince allowed him an apartment in his palace, and came to viſit him there himſelf; at the end of the viſit he ſaid to him, *You come not for nothing into my ſtate; probably you have a deſign to do me ſome good. My lord,* replied Confucius, *I am but an unprofitable man, yet I avow, if your majeſty will but follow my counſel, you will not be the worſe for it: my intent is to preſent to you wiſe men, to fill the principal places of your ſtate. With all my heart,* ſays the prince, *Who are they? My lord, Li-in, the ſon of a huſbandman, is a man on whom you may rely.* The king burſt out a laughing; *How,* ſays he, *an huſbandman? I have not employment enough for the lords of my court, and would you have me take a labourer into my ſervice.*

The philoſopher, without being moved, replied, *Virtue is of all trades and conditions, altho' it is more commonly annexed to a mean condition: we have two* *kingdoms in the empire that have been founded by two labourers*. What inconvenience is there, tho' a man of that character govern yours? Believe me, ſir, the court hath hitherto ſupply'd you with a great company of evil miniſters; ſuffer a country village to preſent you with a wiſe man. You want employments, you ſay, to place all the lords that encompaſs you. If virtue alone were rewarded, you would find in your court more places than officers; nay, and perhaps would be forced to call for labourers to ſupply them.* When the body of the nobility does not furniſh the ſtate with great men, the great men that may be found amongſt the people muſt be choſen, and of them muſt be compoſed the body of the nobility.

Maxim V.

A ſmall fault often denotes great qualities.

He one day adviſed the king of Ouei to ſet a certain great officer at the head of his army; but the king excuſed himſelf for not doing it, becauſe that, being formerly a Mandarine, he took a couple of eggs from a country fellow. *A man who hath abuſed his authority*, ſays he, *deſerves not any longer to command. Theſe ſentiments of equity*, replied Confucius, *are very laudable in a king; but perhaps the Mandarine's moderation, that ſtole but two eggs, is no leſs to be admired. Such a ſmall fault, in the whole life of a man, denotes in him great qualities: In a word, a prudent prince makes uſe of his ſubjects in the government, as a carpenter uſes timber in his works, he does not reject one good beam, becauſe there is a flaw in it, provided it be ſtrong enough to ſupport a whole edifice: I would not adviſe your majeſty, for the loſs of a couple of eggs, to turn off a captain, who may conquer you two realms.*

Maxim VI.

A wiſe prince will be no great ſpeaker, nor deliver his opinion firſt.

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* Tcheou-coum *and* Cham-tcho.

The ſame king one day held a council in preſence of Confucius, where he ſpoke of ſome affairs with ſuch a ſhow of wit, that his miniſters applauded him, and forthwith allowed him to be in the right, and comply'd with him, without more ado. At the cloſe this king ſaid to Confucius, *What's your judgment of the courſe we have taken in our laſt deliberation? Sir*, ſays the philoſopher, *I do not perceive that they have yet deliberated: you ſpoke with a great deal of wit; your miniſters, very deſirous to pleaſe you, have faithfully repeated the diſcourſe; they have told your opinion, and not their own; and, when you adjourned the aſſembly, I ſtill expected the beginning of the council.*

Some days after the ſame king aſked him his advice concerning the preſent government: He anſwered him, *No body ſpeaks ill of it. That is my deſire*, ſays the king. *And that, ſir, is what you ought not to deſire*, reply'd Confucius: *When a ſick perſon is forced to be fed with flattering promiſes of perfect health, he is not far from death; a man is bound to diſcover to the prince the defects of the mind, with the ſame liberty men diſcover to the phyſician the maladies of the body.*

Maxim VII.

The wiſe man goes forward apace, becauſe the right way is always the ſhorteſt; on the contrary, the crafty politician arrives later at his end, becauſe he walks in by-ways and crooked paths.

The king of Ouei confeſſed to Confucius, that there was nothing ſo fine as wiſdom; but the difficulty of acquiring it diſcouraged the moſt reſolute, and diverted the beſt diſpoſed minds. *As for my part*, added he, *I have uſed endeavours, but all in vain; I am reſolved to torment myſelf no longer about it, and a ſmall parcel of policy will ſupply the defect of that wiſdom that is neceſſary to good governing. Sir*, anſwered Confucius, *'tis true, wiſdom is ſeated on a lofty*

lofty place, but the road to it is not ſo difficult as people imagine, it grows plainer and plainer, according as you go on; and, once got at it, one cannot go back without running great danger to fall down the precipice; in ſuch a ſort, that a wiſe man cannot ceaſe being ſo, without doing violence to himſelf in ſome reſpect.

But do you think that a prince hath no trouble when he marches in the indirect paths of an artificial and knaviſh policy? All theſe refinements and ſubtleties perplex the ſpirit: and how ſhall one diſengage one's ſelf? None enter into a maze without danger, ſince you often loſe your way there; and, if you chance to get out, it is after a great many wanderings, and errors, and diſquiets of mind. Take you which way you pleaſe; as for me, ſir, I am perſuaded, that in a popular government, ſolid and conſtant virtue goes further than the moſt ſubtle and refined policy.

Maxim VIII.

Thoſe, who deſire the moſt perfect ſtate, do not always ſearch the perfection of the ſtate, but the ſweetneſs. Would you be fix'd in the world? Fix this in your mind, that to take up a new courſe of life is nothing elſe but to paſs from one trouble to another.

A prince, being wrought upon by the life that Confucius led, perceived thoſe firſt deſires of wiſdom ſpringing up in his heart, that a good education and good examples are wont to infuſe into young perſons, when they have not been yet corrupted by the commerce of the world. He went to find him out, and told him, That *he was reſolved to abandon all things to become one of his diſciples; for, the truth is, there are a thouſand ſorrows to be undergone in that courſe of life, wherein my birth engageth me, whereas yours ſeems to me full of ſweetneſs and delight.*

Since 'tis the ſweetneſs you look for in my ſtate, anſwered Confucius, *I ſhould not adviſe you to enter upon it: a man oftentimes meets with trouble, the more he* *he avoids it. Heaven, which hath inſpired me with the love of a private life, hath been pleaſed to ſend you into the world to rule. Be a king, and do not ſeek after peace too much, but rather,* if you be not willing to loſe your ſtates, behave yourſelf gallantly againſt your enemies; but fight more courageouſly againſt your paſſions, and againſt being in love with a ſweet and eaſy life, if you have not a mind to deſtroy yourſelf.

Maxim IX.

Thoſe who are diligent, and would do all, put off many things till the next day.

His own ſon ſaid to him one day, *I carefully apply myſelf to all ſorts of ſtudy, I omit nothing whereby to become a good ſcholar, and yet I make ſmall progreſs.* His wiſe father ſaid to him, *Omit ſomething, and you will make a great progreſs. Amongſt all thoſe that take long journies a foot, did you ever ſee one that ran? In all things you muſt go orderly to work, and not deſire to embrace that which is not ſuitable to your abilities, otherwiſe your labour will be uſeleſs. The ſaints firſt of all apply themſelves to the moſt eaſy things; ſucceſs gives them courage and ſtrength to grapple with more difficult things, by little and little they become perfect.* Thoſe, who like you would do all in one day, do nothing all their life: On the other hand, thoſe, who never apply themſelves but to one thing, find at the long run that they have done all.

Maxim X.

One ought not to wonder that the wiſe man walks ſlower in the way of virtue, than the ill man does in that of vice, paſſion hurries, and wiſdom guides.

One of his friends complained of the ſmall progreſs he made in virtue; *I have labour'd,* ſaid he, *theſe ſeveral years to imitate the primitive ſaints, and I am ſtill imperfect; had I but never ſo little applied myſelf to imitate the wicked, and follow their example,*

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I ſhould have rid a great deal of ground in a ſhort ſpace; why is it not ſo eaſy to attain to perfection in virtue as in vice?

This is no wonder, ſays Confucius, *virtue is on high, and vice is in the loweſt place: It requires pains and time to go upward; one minute ſufficeth to fall down the precipice. However, let me intreat you not to let yourſelf be abuſed by this ſeeming eaſineſs. It is true, that one is ſooner determined to evil than to good; but ſeeing one repents of it at length, it is a certain ſign that there is leſs trouble to do well, than to perſevere in evil.*

Maxim XI.

True nobility does not conſiſt in blood, but in merit; we are truly high and great, when virtue prevents our groveling with the reſt of mankind.

Confucius, ſeeing a man carry a fiſh, ſighed, and told them who demanded the reaſon of it: *This fiſh, that might have eaſily preſerved its life, hath loſt it notwithſtanding, by complying with the enticing pleaſures of a deceitful bait; yet this fiſh has a good plea, becauſe ſhe has not reaſon; but are men excuſable, to loſe virtue that is much more precious than life, in letting themſelves be catched by the baits that the good things and vanity of the world preſent them with? If we knew what we wanted, we ſhould purſue other courſes to obtain it. Would you be rich; contemn every thing, nay, even the contempt and ſcorn men caſt upon you:* That man is raiſed to a pitch far above others, when calumny and reproaches cannot reach him.

Maxim XII.

In the ſtate wherein we are, perſeverance in well-doing conſiſts not ſo much in not falling, as in riſing again as often as we fall.

You are very happy, Confucius, ſaid ſome Mandarines that he inſtructed, *becauſe arrived at the higheſt degree of virtue; it is a long time, I'll warrant you, ſince you left ſin; as for us, what efforts ſoever we make*

make to become good men, there paſſes not a day but we commit conſiderable faults. Altho' every fault be blameable, ſays *Confucius, you are not ſo unhappy as you think, in committing many: your life, as well as mine, is a long journey; the way is difficult, and our reaſon, half extinct by paſſions, furniſhes but little light to guide us: what means is there to avoid ſtumbling ſometimes in the dark? when one gets up again, the fall retards our journey, but does not quite put it off and interrupt it. It would be an unhappineſs for us, to commit no more but one, like the wicked that fall but once, becauſe the firſt precipice ſtops them; but honeſt good men, that continue their walking, fall often.*

Maxim XIII.

No man knows half of his own faults; he would bluſh to appear to the eyes of others, what he appears to himſelf.

One complained one day, *That nature, in beſtowing two eyes upon men to behold the beauty of bodies, had beſtowed none on them that are able to ſee minds, and diſcover the ſecrets of hearts: thus virtue and vice, ſay they, are confounded in the world.*

Confucius ſaid, *You and I ſhould be in a woful taking, if we were not cut ſhort as to that matter, for we ſhould not ſecure our own failings and weakneſſes, we gain more by it than you are aware of; for I maintain that the philoſopher would ſuffer more to appear weak, than the wicked man to appear vicious.*

Maxim XIV.

Never ſpeak of yourſelf to others, neither good nor bad; not good, becauſe they will not believe you; not evil, becauſe they know more already than you would have them.

Thus he ſpoke one day to his diſciples, who took a pride ever and anon to blame themſelves: to which he added, *For a man to confeſs his faults, when he is reproved for them, is modeſty.*

To lay them open to his friend is ingenuity, and confidence.

To reprove himſelf for them is humility.

But to go preach them to every body is, if one have not a great care, a piece of pride.

By this ſcantling of Confucius's philoſophy you may judge, my lord, that reaſon is of all times, and of all places. Seneca hath ſpoken nothing better; and had I the leiſure, as I have a deſign to make an intire collection of the maxims of our philoſopher, peradventure no requiſite would be wanting to give him a place amongſt our ſages of antiquity. I wiſh, at leaſt, my lord, that the portraiture, I have offered, may not diſpleaſe you: were he ſtill alive at this day, as much a philoſopher as he is, I am ſure he would be ſenſible of the approbation you ſhould afford him. Such a teſtimony as yours, always clear, always ſincere, muſt needs do a kindneſs to the greateſt men. Perhaps hitherto in France they have not juſtly valued what is ſo much honoured in the Eaſt: but, ſo ſoon as you ſhall pleaſe to honour him with your eſteem, every body will be perſuaded that antiquity hath not flattered him, and that China, in chooſing him for a maſter and a doctor, hath done juſtice to his merit. I am with a moſt profound reſpect,

My Lord,

Your Grace's moſt humble,

and moſt obedient Servant,

L. J.

LETTER VIII.

To my Lord Philipeaux, *Secretary of State.*

Of the particular Character of the Wit and Temper of the Chineſe.

My Lord,

IF in this letter, which I have the honour to write to you, I confine myſelf only to treat of what concerns the particular character and genius of the Chineſe, it is not becauſe I forget the obligation I lie under, to give you an exact account of all the other things we are acquainted with in our voyages; yet I ſuppoſed that I could not more fitly begin to diſcharge this duty, than by entertaining you, at the firſt ſight, with that which naturally ought to be pleaſant to you; a captain would more willingly hear a diſcourſe of wars, and of the bravery of the Tartars, and a courtier of the gentility of the Chineſe; but when a man has ſuch extraordinary parts as you have, and is heir to a family that has always ſignalized itſelf by its inſight into ſciences, and penetration in the management of the moſt important affairs, I was apt to believe that one could not treat of a ſubject that can be more proper, and more delightful to you.

Of all the people of the habitable world, there is not any one that does not ſtand upon his wit and ingenuity, and oftentimes the moſt barbarous prefer themſelves before the moſt polite and accompliſh'd. The inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope, whom we cannot repreſent to ourſelves, but with a kind of horror, whom we can ſcarce give ourſelves leave to rank amongſt men, do neverthleſs look upon the Europeans as ſlaves, and upon the Hollanders as no other than a company of ſtupid fellows, not vers'd in the method of government. The people of Siam, whoſe phyſiognomy is well enough known in France, who have in the Indies ſouls adapted to their bodies, do uſually ſay, That Heaven, in diſtributing its benefits and natural qualities, hath granted to the French the bravery and ſcience of war; to the Engliſh, the art of navigation; to the Hollanders, a particular knack in trading; to the Chineſe, the wiſdom of well-governing; but that it hath given wit to the people of Siam. Had not they intimated it to us, perhaps we ſhould not have made ſuch a reflexion, for it is a diſcovery that we owe to them. After all, we muſt not wonder if the Chineſe, who term all the people of the Eaſt blind, have reſerved to themſelves the preheminence, and have believed themſelves to be, without all diſpute, the moſt intelligent nation in the world.

There is no queſtion to be made but they are an ingenious people, but methinks no body yet hath been truly acquainted with their character. To ſee their libraries, univerſities, the prodigious number of their doctors, their obſervatories, and the care they take to be exact in their obſervations, one would be apt to conclude, that this nation is not only ingenious, but perfectly well vers'd in all ſorts of ſciences; that they have a vaſt reach, invention, and a genius for every thing. Nevertheleſs, albeit for theſe four thouſand years, they have allowed recompences to learned and expert men; and tho' the fortune of an infinite number of men depends upon their good parts, yet have they not had one ſingle man, of great atchievements in ſpeculative ſcience: they have diſcovered all theſe precious mines, without troubling themſelves to dig for them: enjoying peaceably, for ſo many ages, the reputation of the moſt knowing men in the world, becauſe they ſee no body but who are more ignorant than themſelves.

So that I ſuppoſe I may ſafely aver, without offering them any injury, that amongſt the qualities wherewith Heaven hath reſpectively inriched the people of the world, they have not ſhewed that ſpirit of penetration and exactneſs which is ſo neceſſary to thoſe who addict themſelves to the ſearch of nature. Nor have they that logick which we have ſo much improved, that geometry that we in France have brought to ſuch a high degree of perfection, which may paſs for the maſter-piece of human underſtanding, which yet will never get admittance into their academies; and, maugre all the natural pride that poſſeſſes them, they will not ſtick to confeſs, That, as to theſe matters, the Europeans will in all human probability be their maſters.

It is true, a philoſophy they have; it is likewiſe true, that they lay down certain principles for the explaining the compoſition of bodies, their propriety, their effects. Neither are they altogether ignorant in anatomy; nay, they grant a circulation of the blood and humours; but all their notions are ſo general, confuſed, and moſt an end ſo falſe, that I am afraid in this place to particularize them.

Their arithmetick is more perfect, altho' they do not make uſe of the cypher, as we do, which is notwithſtanding of great uſe. They do not practiſe the rules of arithmetick by calculation; but they uſe an inſtrument compoſed of a little board a foot and an half long, croſs which they ſcore ten or twelve little parallel lines or ſticks, upon which are ſtrung ſeveral moveable buttons; by putting them together, or by ſeparating them one from another, they reckon, almoſt as we do, by counters; but with ſuch great dexterity and eaſineſs, that they will keep pace with a man, let him read a book of accounts never ſo faſt. At the end they find the operation performed, which they have a certain way to prove.

Their geometry is very ſuperficial, it is reſtrained to a very few propoſitions, and to ſome problems of algebra, which they reſolve without elements or principles, and that only by induction.

They pretend to be the inventors of muſick, and to have heretofore carried it to its acme of perfection: but either they are miſtaken, or they have quite loſt it; for that they practiſe at this day is ſo imperfect, that it does not ſo much as deſerve the name of muſick.

As for aſtronomy, it muſt be confeſs'd, that never did people in the world addict themſelves ſo conſtantly to it. This ſcience is beholding to them for abundance of obſervations; but the hiſtory, that reports them in general, hath not been careful to deſcend to particulars, which would be neceſſary for the reaping all the benefit ſuch mighty care ſeems to promiſe. However, it hath not been unprofitable to poſterity. We have above 400 obſervations, as well of the eclipſes and comets, as conjunctions, that make good their chronology, and may conduce to the perfecting of ours.

Altho' their tables were imperfect, yet have they been very ſerviceable to regulate the time; but, after a certain continuance of years, their aſtronomers were obliged to make ſome amendments therein, becauſe they did not exactly agree with the heavens till, in the beginning of this century, they attained ſome ſkill in our aſtronomy. The Europeans ſince have every way reformed their kalendar, which buſineſs has made them ſo famous, and ſo neceſſary in that ſtate, that nothing hath ſo much contributed to ſettle religion in that country, and alſo to defend it in the various circumſtances of perſecution it hath lain under.

If China hath been deficient in excellent mathematicians, they have at leaſt had perfect aſtrologers; becauſe, for the well ſucceeding in judicial aſtrology, it ſufficeth to be an able deceiver, and to have a knack of lying handſomely, which no nation can diſpute with China. There have been for theſe many ages cheating mountebanks by profeſſion, who promiſe, by the inſight they have in the motion and influence of the ſtars, the philoſophers ſtone, and immortality. They mark in the almanack, every year, the good and bad days for building, marriages, for undertaking journies and voyages, and for ſuch like actions, the ſucceſs whereof depends more upon the wiſdom and diſcretion of men, than upon the influence of the heavens.

The miſſionaries fearing leſt they might aſcribe the fooleries and ridiculous ſuperſtitions to them, becauſe they make them the authors of the kalendar, thought themſelves obliged to make a publick declaration how little hand they have in the matter, they proteſted that they abſolutely condemned them: and the emperor, that is not ſubject to theſe weakneſſes, was willing they ſhould explain themſelves, as to that buſineſs, for his particular ſatiſfaction.

Medicine hath not been quite neglected and laid aſide; but becauſe they wanted phyſicks, or natural philoſophy and anatomy, the foundation of it, they never made any great progreſs therein; yet muſt it be confeſſed that they have acquired a particular ſkill in pulſes, that hath made them famous in the world. The emperor Hoampti compoſed a treatiſe of the ſame above four thouſand years ago *. Ever ſince that time the phyſicians of China have look'd upon that ſcience as the foundation of all medicine.

They feel the pulſe after ſuch a manner as would make a man ſmile that is not accuſtomed to it. After they have apply'd their four fingers along the artery, and have preſs'd ſtrongly and uniformly the

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* It is juſt 4392 years.

patient's wriſt, they relax their fingers by degrees, till the blood, that was ſtopp'd by the preſſing, hath retaken its uſual courſe; then, a moment after, they begin again to preſs the arm cloſe, which they continue a conſiderable time; after that, juſt like men that intended to touch the frets of a muſical inſtrument, they riſe and fall their fingers ſucceſſively one after another, pinching ſoftly, or hard, ſometimes ſlower, ſometimes faſter, till ſuch time as the artery anſwers to the touches which the phyſician moves, and till the ſtrength, weakneſs, diſorder, and other ſymptoms of the pulſe be manifeſt.

They pretend that there never happens any extraordinary accident in the conſtitution, but does alter the blood, and conſequently cauſes a different impreſſion upon the veſſels. It is not ſo much by reaſoning and arguing that they are inſtructed in this point, as by a long experience, which much better diſcovers to them all theſe wonderful changes than theory and ſpeculation.

When they have a long time been attentive to the voice of nature, that explains itſelf by the beatings of the pulſe, they perfectly and truly perceive thoſe differences, which to others ſeem imperceptible. The pervigilium and lethargy, loſs of appetite, or deſire to eat, the head-ach, weakneſs of ſtomach, fulneſs or emptineſs; all theſe are the cauſe or the effect of ſome diſtemper in the maſs of blood.

So that its motion will be at that time leſs frequent or quicker, fuller or weaker, uniform or irregular. Sometimes there will be an undulation or trembling, cauſed by the ebullition of the whole maſs of the humours; which may be perceived like to a bell that trembles after it hath been rung; ſometimes alſo the artery will not bear a ſtroke, but will ſwell by little and little. By preſſing it, one will moreover be able to perceive ſeveral effects that do not declare themſelves to the bare touch; for at that time the courſe of the circulation, which is ſuſpended or leſſened, which begins again immediately after, with more force, will give occaſion to judge variouſly and differently of the diſpoſition of the heart, of the fermentation there performed, of the quality of the blood there prepared, of the obſtacles that impede its paſſages, of groſs and crude matter that overcharges it, of the nature of the ſpirits that too much rarify it, and precipitate tranſpiration. The Chineſe phyſicians pretend to have, by a long experience, diſtinguiſhed all theſe differences of pulſes, and to have been able to know all the diſtempers that are incident thereto; ſo that they hold the patient's hand a quarter of an hour at leaſt; ſometimes the right, ſometimes the left, and ſometimes both of them at the ſame time. And after all, as if they were inſpired, they play the prophet: *You were never troubled with the head-ach,* ſay they, *but with an heavineſs that hath made you drowſy*; or elſe, *You have loſt your appetite, you will recover it again within three days preciſely. This evening, about ſunſet, your head will be freer; your pulſe indicates pain in the belly, unleſs you have eaten ſuch or ſuch meat; this indiſpoſition will laſt five days, after which it will ceaſe.* And ſo for other ſymptoms of the malady, which they find out or prognoſticate pretty exactly, when they are expert in the ſcience; for, as for others, they are commonly falſe prophets.

It is not to be queſtioned after all theſe teſtimonies we have, but that in this reſpect they have ſomething extraordinary, nay, and even wonderful: however, a man ſhould always miſtruſt them, and one cannot be too much upon his guard againſt them, becauſe they make uſe of all means imaginable to get themſelves ſecretly inſtructed concerning the patient's condition before they viſit them. Nay, they are ſo cunning (to get themſelves reputation) as to feign a kind of diſtemper which ſometimes they themſelves procure afterwards. A perſon told me, that, ſending for a phyſician and a chirurgeon to cure him of a wound, one of them told him, *That the malady was occaſioned by a ſmall worm that was inſinuated into the fleſh, which would infallibly produce a gangrene, if by ſome remedy or other it were not fetch'd out: that he was the only man in all the country that had this arcanum, and would put it in practice for his ſake, provided he would not grudge him a conſiderable ſum of money.* The ſick perſon promiſed him he would not; and paid him part of it beforehand. But this cheating ſophiſter, after divers unprofitable medicines, entangled, at laſt, a little worm in his plaiſter, which he pull'd out an hour after in triumph, as if it came out of the very wound. His companion, that gain'd nothing by the management of this buſineſs, afterwards detected it, but it was too late; and the chirurgeon comforted up himſelf more eaſily for the loſs of his reputation, than the ſick perſon for the loſs of his money.

However the caſe may ſtand as to the capacity of the Chineſe phyſicians, yet certain it is, that they predict the diſtemper eaſier than they cure it; and men die in their hands as they do elſewhere. They prepare their own remedies, that ordinarily conſiſt of pills; which, according as they are prepared, are either ſudorifick, purge the blood and humours, fortify the ſtomach, ſuppreſs vapours; or are reſtringent, diſpoſe to evacuation; but ſeldom work by ſtool. They do not let blood, nor know the clyſter, but ſince they have had correſpondence with the phyſicians of Macao. They do not diſapprove the remedy, but name it *The Remedy of the Barbarians.* They apply cupping-glaſſes not only upon the ſcapulæ, but alſo upon the belly, to aſſwage the pain of the cholick.

They are in a manner alſo perſuaded, that the majority of diſeaſes are cauſed by malignant and corrupted wind that hath ſlipp'd into the muſcles, and doth ill affect all the parts of the body : the moſt ſure means to diſſipate them is to apply, in different places, red-hot needles, or buttons of fire : this is their ordinary remedy. Once I ſeemed to be ſurprized at this practice, when a Chineſe ſaid, alluding to phlebotomy, *They treat you in Europe with the ſword, but here they martyr us by fire* ; *this mode will probably never alter, becauſe phyſicians feel not the miſchief they do us, and are not worſe paid for tormenting us, than for curing us.*

I cannot tell whether or no they might have learnt this violent remedy of the Indians ; or whether the Indians themſelves might not have received it from the Chineſe phyſicians ; but they pretend in the Indies that fire cures all diſeaſes : this perſuaſion, which they perſiſt in, makes every day a great many miſerable perſons, whom they cauterize upon the ſlighteſt illneſs.

Yet there be ſome maladies that are not curable, but by this means. The people of the country, but eſpecially the ſlaves, are much troubled with a violent cholick, which the Portugueſe call Mordetchin, occaſioned by the indigeſtion of the ſtomach, and accompanied, for the moſt part, with continual vomitings ; the gripes it produceth are cruel, and the grief and anguiſh often deprives them of their wits. This grief is infallibly mortal, if they do not remedy it after the following manner : They lightly apply an iron peal red-hot to the ſoles of the feet ; if the patient ſhews any ſigns of feeling, they paſs no further, and he is cured : if he be inſenſible of this firſt operation, they lay it on harder, and ſtill continue to preſs the peal, burning unmercifully to the very bone, without deſiſting, till the patient complain, which puts an end to the malady and remedy. But if the fire, how violent ſoever, makes not itſelf be felt, they deſpair of healing, and in a ſhort time the patient dies.

Amongſt all the China remedies, there are none ſo much eſteemed as cordials; they are provided with all ſorts of them, and very natural ones; for they conſiſt for the moſt part of herbs, leaves, and roots. Their ſimples are numerous; and, if the people of the country may be believed, they have all of them ſovereign and experienced virtues. I brought along with me hither near four hundred, deſigned in their natural colours and figure, according to thoſe the emperor cauſed to be painted for his cloſet. Father Viſdelou, one of the ſix jeſuits his majeſty ſent thither Anno 1685, is very intent upon the tranſlation of the Chineſe Herbal; wherein are all the virtues and qualities of all thoſe plants explained. This father, who hath accompliſhed himſelf in the knowledge of books, will thereto add particular reflexions of his own; and I make no queſtion but what, he ſupplies us with thereupon, will enrich our botany, and ſatisfy the ingenious and curious.

Amongſt theſe ſimples there are two that I may ſpeak of beforehand: the firſt is the leaf of * Thee, as they call it in China; they are much divided in their opinions, touching the properties they aſcribe to it. Some do maintain that it hath admirable ones; others, that it is but a fancy and meer whim of the Europeans, that are always in love with novelties, and put a value upon that which they do not underſtand: in that, as in all other things where men do not agree, I think we ought to take the middle path.

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* Thee is a corrupt word of the province of Fokien, it muſt be called *Tçha*; it is the term of the Mandarine language.

In China they are ſubject neither to gout, ſciatica, nor ſtone; and many imagine, that Thee preſerves them againſt all theſe diſtempers. The Tartars, that feed upon raw fleſh, fall ſick, and ſuffer continual indigeſtions ſo ſoon as ever they give over drinking of it; and, that they may have plenty of it, they bargain to furniſh the emperor with almoſt all the horſes that ſerve to remount his cavalry; when any one is troubled with a vertigo that overcharges the brain, he finds himſelf extremely relieved ſo ſoon as he accuſtoms himſelf to Thee. In France there are abundance of people that find it good for the gravel, crudities, head-aches; nay, ſome pretend to have been cured of the gout by it, almoſt miraculouſly; ſo quick and ſenſible has been its effect. All this proves that Thee is no chimera and conceit. Nay, ſome after drinking of it ſleep the better, which argues that it is not proper to ſuppreſs fumes: ſome there be who never take it after meals, without experiencing miſchievous effects; their digeſtion is interrupted and diſturbed; and they find, a long time after, crudities, and a troubleſome repletion. Others find no benefit by it neither in gout nor ſciatica. A great many ſay, that it dries, makes lean, and that it obſtructs; and that, if there be any good qualities in it, the moſt part of other leaves would in a manner produce the ſame effect. Theſe experiments evince, that its virtue is not ſo univerſal as people imagine.

So that, in my opinion, one ſhould ſpeak moderately of it, both as to its good and bad qualities. Perhaps warm water alone is a good medicine againſt diſtempers, the cure of which they attribute to Thee; and there are ſeveral people that are exempt from many inconveniencies, becauſe they are uſed to drink warm liquors. Nevertheleſs, it is certain, that Thee is of a corroſive nature, for it attenuates hard victuals wherewith it is boiled, and conſequently is proper

per for digeſtion, that is to ſay, for diſſolution; which alſo proves, that it reſiſts obſtructions, and that liquors, impregnated with its particles and ſalts, carry off, and more eaſily ſeparate whatſoever adheres to the tunicles of the veſſels. This very quality is proper to conſume ſuperfluous humours, to put into motion thoſe that ſtagnate and corrupt, and to evacuate others, that cauſe the gout and ſciatica: ſo that Thee, with caution, is a very good remedy, altho' it be not ſo effectual, nor univerſal, but that the temperament of certain perſons, the heighth of the diſtemper, together with certain occult diſpoſitions, may many times retard the effect, or even fruſtrate its virtue.

To uſe it with benefit, it is requiſite to know it, for there is more than one ſort of it. That of the province of Xenſi is coarſe, harſh, and unpleaſant. The Tartars drink of it: there is neceſſary to them a ſtronger menſtruum than to the Chineſe, becauſe they feed on raw fleſh. It is exceeding cheap in the country, a pound of it will coſt three pence. In this ſame province there is found a particular ſpecies of it, more reſembling moſs, than the leaves of a tree; and they pretend that the oldeſt is of excellent uſe in acute diſtempers. They likewiſe adminiſter to ſick people a third ſort, whoſe leaves are very long and thick, and its goodneſs increaſes in proportion to its being kept; but that is not the Thee in uſe.

That which they commonly drink in China hath no particular name, becauſe it is gathered any where in different territories and ſoils: it is good, the infuſion is reddiſh, the taſte faint and ſomewhat bitter: the people uſe it indifferently at all hours of the day, and it is their moſt uſual drink.

But perſons of quality uſe two other kinds that are in requeſt in China. The firſt is called Thee Soumlo; it is the name of the place where it is gathered; the leaves are ſomewhat long, the infuſion clear and green when it is freſh, the taſte pleaſant; it ſmells, as they ſay in France, a little of violets, but this taſte is not natural; and the Chineſe have often aſſured me, that, to be good, it ought to have no taſte at all. This is that they commonly preſent at viſits; but it is exceeding corroſive; perhaps the ſugar they mix with it here corrects its acrimony; but in China, where it is drunk pure, too great a uſe of it would be apt to ſpoil the ſtomach.

The ſecond kind is called Thee Voui; the leaves that are little, and inclining to black, tinge the water with a yellow colour. The taſte is delicious, and even the weakeſt ſtomach always agrees with it. In winter it is to be uſed temperately, but in ſummer one cannot drink too much. It is eſpecially good in ſweating, after travelling, running, or any other violent exerciſe. They give of it alſo to ſick people; and thoſe, who have any care of their health, drink no other. When I was at Siam, I heard them often talk of the flower of Thee, of imperial Thee, and of ſeveral other ſorts of Thee, the price of which was yet more extraordinary, than the properties they aſcribe to it: but in China I heard no ſuch thing.

Generally ſpeaking, that the Thee may prove excellent, it ought to be gathered early, when the leaves are yet ſmall, tender, and juicy. They begin commonly to gather it in the months of March and April, according as the ſeaſon is forward; they afterwards expoſe them to the ſteam of boiling water to ſoften them again; ſo ſoon as they are penetrated by it, they draw them over copper-plates kept on the fire, which dries them by degrees, till they grow brown, and roll up of themſelves in that manner we ſee them. If the Chineſe were not ſuch great cheats, their Thee would be better; but they oftentimes mix other herbs with it, to ſwell the ſize at a ſmall charge, and ſo get more money by it:

ſo that it is a rare thing to meet with any purely without mixture.

It commonly grows in vallies, and at the foot of mountains; the choiceſt grows in ſtony ſoils; that which is planted in light grounds holds the ſecond rank. The leaſt valuable of all is found in yellow earth; but, in what place ſoever it is cultivated, care muſt be taken to expoſe it to the ſouth; it gets more ſtrength by that, and bears three years after being ſown. Its root reſembles that of a peach tree, and its flowers reſemble white wild roſes. The trees grow of all ſizes, from two feet to an hundred, and ſome are to be met with that two men can ſcarce graſp in their arms; this is what the Chineſe Herbal relates. But from my own obſervation I can give you the following account.

Entering upon the province of Fokien, they firſt made me obſerve Thee upon the declining of a little hill; it was not above five or ſix feet high; ſeveral ſtalks, each of which was an inch thick, joined together, and divided at the top into many ſmall branches, compoſed a kind of cluſter, much what like our myrtle. The trunk, tho' ſeemingly dry, yet bore very green branches and leaves. Theſe leaves were drawn out in length at the point, pretty ſtrait, an inch, or an inch and an half long, and indented in their whole circumference. The oldeſt ſeemed ſomewhat white without, they were hard, brittle, and bitter. The new ones, on the contrary, were ſoft, pliable, reddiſh, ſmooth, tranſparent, and pretty ſweet to the taſte, eſpecially after they had been a little chewed.

It being the month of September, I found three ſorts of fruit. In the new branches there were little ſlimy peaſe, green without, and full of yellow grains within. In others, the fruit is as big as beans, but of different figures; ſome round, containing a pea; others drawn out in length, that contained two; ſome others of a triangular figure bore three, very like to thoſe that bear the tallow-grain, ſo famous in *China.* The firſt membrane or skin, wherein theſe grains are infolded, is green, very thick, and ſomewhat even. The ſecond is white, and thinner; under which a third very fine pellicle covers a kind of gland, or ſmall nut perfectly round, that ſticks to the bark by a little fibre, from whence it derives its nouriſhment. When this fruit is young, it hath bitterneſs in it; but, a day or two after it has been gathered, it withers, grows long and yellow, and wrinkles like an old hazel-nut; at length it becomes unctuous and very bitter. Beſides that, I found a third ſort of hard, old fruits, the firſt skin of which, between open and ſhut, ſhewed within a hard bark, brittle, and altogether reſembling that of a cheſnut. After I had broken it, ſcarce did I find any ſign of fruit, ſo dry and flat was it grown. In ſome others the ſame fruit was pulverized, in others was found a little nut quite dried up, and covered with its firſt pellicle.

Amongſt theſe fruits, a great number of them have no germ or bud, which they call females; thoſe that have any may be ſown, and produce trees; but the Chineſe do commonly make uſe of grafts to plant. The better to underſtand the nature of this tree, I had the curioſity to taſte the bark of the trunk and branches. I chewed likewiſe ſome of the wood and fibres; both of them ſeemed to me not at all bitter, ſo far from it, they left a reliſh ſweet like that of liquoriſh, which yet one does not taſte till ſome time after the chewing. Altho' this particular account may diſpleaſe thoſe that are not concerned in the knowledge of plants, yet I am ſure that the more curious could wiſh a more nice and exact account, as to the delicate mixture of colours in the flower, the orderly diſpoſition of their fibres, the conformation of the ſmall branches and roots, and a thouſand other particulars relating to the anatomy of them; but that is the buſineſs of time and leiſure: I had but a quarter of an hour to examine the tree of which I have the honour to write to you.

There is in China another ſimple much more ſcarce than Thee, and upon that very account more valued, which they call Gin-Sem: Gin ſignifies a man, and Sem a plant, or ſimple, as much as to ſay, The human ſimple, or the ſimple that reſembles a man. Thoſe who till this time have given another conſtruction to theſe words are excuſable, becauſe they do not underſtand the emphaſis of the Chineſe characters, which do alone contain the true ſignification of terms: the learned give it abundance of other names in their writings, that ſufficiently declare how much they ſet by it; as the ſpiritous ſimple, the pure ſpirits of the earth, the fat of the ſea, the Panacea, and the remedy that diſpenſes immortality, and ſeveral others of that nature.

It is a root as thick as half the little finger, and as long again. It is divided into two branches, which makes a figure pretty like a man with his two legs; its colour inclines to yellow, and when it is kept any time it grows wrinkled, and dry'd like wood; the leaves it ſhoots forth are little, and terminate in a point, the branches are black, the flower violet, and the ſtalk covered with hair; they ſay that it produces but one of them; that this ſtalk produces three branches, and that each branch bears the leaves by fours and fives; it grows in the ſhade, in a moiſt ſoil, yet ſo ſlowly, that it comes not to perfection till after a long term of years. It is commonly found under a tree called Kia-chu, little differing from the ſycomore. Altho' they fetch it from ſeveral places, yet the beſt came heretofore from Petcij. That which is at this day in uſe is taken in Leaotum, a province depending upon China, and ſituated in the oriental Tartary.

Of all cordials, according to the Chineſe opinion, there are none comparable to Gin-ſem; it is ſweet and delightful, altho' there be in it a little ſmack of bitterneſs; its effects are marvellous; it purifies the blood, fortifies the ſtomach, adds motion to a languid pulſe, excites the natural heat, and withal augments the radical moiſture. Phyſicians never know how to make an end when they ſpecify its virtues, and have whole volumes of its different uſes. I have a collection of their receipts that I ſhould report intire in this place, if I were not afraid to be tedious, and treſpaſs upon your patience. I may print them hereafter, together with a great many treatiſes relating to the phyſick or medicine of the Chineſe. I ſhall only add, to what I have but now ſpoken, the uſual courſe they take in diſtempers attended with faintneſs and ſwooning, whether it proceeds from ſome accident, or from old age.

Take a drachm of this root (you muſt begin with a little doſe, and may increaſe it afterwards, according to the effect the former doſes ſhall produce) dry it before the fire in a paper, or infuſe it in wine, till it be ſated by it; then cut it in little pieces with your teeth (and not with a knife, iron diminiſhing its virtue) and, when it is calcined, take the powder in form of a bolus, in warm water or wine, according as your diſtemper will permit. This will be an excellent cordial, and by continuing it you will find yourſelf ſenſibly fortified.

Take alſo the ſame quantity of Gin-ſem, or more if you be extremely weak, and when you have divided it into little pieces, infuſe it in half a glaſs full of boiling water, or elſe you may boil it with the water itſelf; the water, if you drink it, will have the ſame effect. The root may ſerve a ſecond time, but it abates of its force. They likewiſe make broths of it, electuaries, lozenges, and ſyrups, which are excellent remedies for all ſorts of diſtempers.

They have alſo another root which the Portugueſe in the Indies call Pao-China, which is an excellent ſudorifick, very proper to purge the humours and corrupted blood; but the deſcription of all theſe ſimples would make me deviate too much, and is not proper for ſuch a ſhort letter as this.

The phyſicians of China do not employ apothecaries for the compoſition of their medicines, they preſcribe and give them at the ſame time themſelves. Sometimes in the patient's chamber, when it may be conveniently done; and ſometimes in their own houſes. They think it ſtrange the Europeans ſhould act otherwiſe, and that they commit the principal point of the cure to men that are not concerned in curing them; and are not ſollicitous about the goodneſs of the drugs, provided they get rid of them to their advantage: but there is another diſorder in China a great deal more dangerous than that they lay to our charge, and that is, that there every body is admitted to practiſe phyſick, like other mechanick arts, without examination, or taking their degrees: ſo that a pitiful fellow, that knows not where to put his head, ſtudies perhaps a phyſick book two or three months, and ſets up for a doctor, *cum privilegio*, at the expence of the patient's life, whom he chuſeth to kill, rather than be forced to ſtarve himſelf for lack of employment. The vulgar, tho' ill ſerved by them, take a ſtrong fancy for theſe pickpockets, and they would reckon themſelves covetous, when they are indiſpoſed, if they did not die, or cauſe their relations to die ſome other way, than by the way of nature.

Yet ſome of them you ſhall have confeſs their fault when it is too late; and I remember that an inhabitant of the city of Sucheu loſing his daughter more through the ignorance of the phyſician, than by the power of the diſeaſe, was ſo enraged, that he cauſed a paper to be printed, wherein the bad conduct of the pretended doctor was laid open, with ſeveral reflections tending to decry him; he affix'd copies of it in all the publick places, and cauſed them to be diſtributed to the principal houſes of the city. This revenge, or, as he termed it, this zeal for the publick good, had the effect he promiſed himſelf. The phyſician loſt, together with his reputation, all his practice, and was reduc'd to ſo great an extremity, that he quickly found himſelf in no condition to kill any body.

The Chineſe, that are mean proficients in ſciences, ſucceed much better in arts; and tho' they have not brought them to that degree of perfection we ſee them in Europe, yet know they in this reſpect not only what is neceſſary for the common uſe of life, but alſo whatever may contribute to convenience, neatneſs, commerce, and even to well-regulated magnificence; they would have got a great deal farther, had not the form of government, that hath preſcribed bounds to the expences of private perſons, put a ſtop to them. The workmen are extraordinary induſtrious, and if they be not ſo good at invention as we, yet do they eaſily comprehend our inventions, and imitate them tolerably well. There are made in ſeveral places of the empire glaſs, watches, piſtols, bombs, and many other pieces of workmanſhip that they may thank us for; but they have had time out of mind gun-powder, printing, and the uſe of the compaſs, which are novel arts in Europe, for which perhaps we are obliged to them.

They divide the compaſs in twenty-four parts only, whereas we deſcribe thirty-two; they evermore imagined that the needle did every where ſhew the true place of the pole, but by divers experiments, which we made before them, they have obſerved ſome variation and declenſion: The loadſtone is found almoſt in every province; it comes alſo to them from Japan; but the grand uſe they make of it is in phyſick; 'tis bought by weight, and the beſt are not ſold for above eight-pence or ten-pence an ounce.

I have brought one with me an inch and an half thick, which, tho' indifferently guarded, takes up nevertheleſs eleven pound weight; it will raiſe fourteen or fifteen when it is right fix'd. In fine, they are very dexterous in cutting them; for in France, tho' they bring them into all figures, yet it is not without great labour and coſt. They cut mine in Nankim in leſs than two hours; the engine they make uſe of to that purpoſe is a plain one; and, if our workmen would uſe it, they would abridge their labour. I ſuppoſed, ſir, that you would not be unwilling to hear an explanation of it.

It is compoſed of two jaumbs three or four feet high, arch-like, with two ſtrings like a ſetting-iron, and parted by a board or ſhingle, which goes croſs to it, and cloſed by a mortiſe in the lee-board. On the head of the jaumbs is ſet flat a little rolling-pin or cylinder, of an inch and an half diameter, which can turn circularly by means of a ſtring rolled in the middle, whoſe two ends hanging are tied to a ſtep, on which the workman ſets his foot.

At one of the extremities of the cylinder a flat piece of iron is faſtened with maſtick by its center, which piece of iron is very thin, very round, and very ſharp all about; it is eight inches diameter, and moves with a great ſwiftneſs, according as the ſteps are ſet high or low. In the mean time the workman preſents the loadſtone in one hand, and in the other the mud made of a very fine ſand, which cools the iron, and ſerves to cut the ſtone; but becauſe the iron, in going thro' the ſand, throws it about with violence, which might blind the workman, care is taken to place juſt under it a little board, turned in the manner of a half circle, which receiveth it and defends the workman.

Navigation is another point that ſhews the addreſs of the Chineſe; we have not always ſeen in Europe ſuch able and adventurous ſailors as we are at preſent; the ancients were not ſo forward to venture themſelves upon the ſeas, where one muſt loſe the ſight of land for a long time together. The danger of being miſtaken in their calculation (for they had not then the uſe of the compaſs) made all pilots circumſpect and wary.

There are ſome who pretend that the Chineſe, a long time before the birth of our Saviour Chriſt, had ſailed all the ſeas of India, and diſcovered the Cape of Good Hope: however that be, it is moſt certain, that from all antiquity they had always ſtout ſhips; and albeit they have not perfected the art of navigation, no more than they have done the ſciences, yet did they underſtand much more of it than the Greeks and Romans; and at this day they ſail as ſecurely as the Portugueſe.

Their veſſels are like ours of all rates, but the model is not ſo fine; they are all flat bottom'd; the fore-caſtle is cut ſhort without a ſtem, the ſtern open in the middle to the end, that the rudder, which they ſhut up as in a chamber, may be defended on the ſides from the waves: this rudder, much longer than ours, is ſtrongly tied to the ſtern-poſt by two cables that paſs under the whole length of the veſſel to the fore-part; two other ſuch like cables hold it up, and facilitate the hoiſting or lowering it, as occaſion ſerves; the bar is as long as is neceſſary for the guiding it; the ſeamen at the helm are alſo aſſiſted by ropes faſtened to the larboard and ſtarboard, and rolled upon the extremity of the bar they hold in their hand, which they faſten or ſlacken as they ſee occaſion, to thruſt or ſtop the helm.

The miſen-maſt is quite towards the fore-part, the main-maſt is not far from the place where we place our miſens. A cord that goes from ſtarboard to larboard, according as the wind chops about, ſerves them for a ſtay and ſhrowds; the boltſprit, which is very weak, is at the larboard, at a conſiderable diſtance from the middle, where we are wont to place them. The round-tops they uſe are very ſhort, but the main-maſt is of a prodigious height and thickneſs; it is ſtrongly ſeized, as far as the upper part of the deck, by two ſide beams, that ſtrengthen it wonderfully; yea, and deprive it of playing, which we leave to ours, becauſe it ſerves to give the veſſel air, and to quicken its motion.

The low ſails are of very thick matt, trimm'd up with laths and long poles to ſtrengthen them, from two feet to two feet, faſtened to the whole length of the maſts by ſeveral little loops; they are not faſtened in the middle, but have three quarters of their breadth looſe, that they may be accommodated to the wind, and readily tack about as occaſion ſerves. A great many ſmall cords hanging at the ſides of the ſail, where they are placed at ſeveral diſtances from the ſail-yard, to the bottom are gathered up, and keep tight the whole length of the matt, and further the motion when the ſhip's courſe is to be changed.

As for the okam to caulk withal, they do not uſe melted pitch and tar, but a compoſition made of lime and oil, or rather of a particular gum with flax of raſped Bambou; this matter is not ſubject to the accidents of fire, and the okam is ſo good, that the veſſel ſeldom or never leaks; neither do they ever uſe the pump, a well or two ſerves to keep the keel dry. In your huge veſſels the anchors are of iron; in the middle ſort they are of an hard, heavy wood, and they only ſtrengthen the ends; but I have obſerved this is not ſufficient; for a ſpring-tide, or a freſh gale of wind, runs the ſhip a-drift, when it is not well anchored: and, to ſpare the coſt of an iron anchor, they often run the risk of being caſt away. As for the cables they are of flax of Coco, Canvas, or Rotin. The Rotin is a kind of long cane, which they make into treſſes like little cords, the twiſts of them are uſually flat, and are ſtronger than all the other; but becauſe they eaſily ſnap under water when they come to touch upon any rock, they do not much uſe them but only upon rivers to tow againſt the tide.

The Chineſe have in their veſſels a captain as we have, but his chief buſineſs is to keep the crew in awe, and to victual them; the pilot marks out the rhumb, and places the compaſs. When they can diſcover no land, or when they do not ken it, thoſe upon duty at the helm ſteer as they pleaſe: ſo ſoon as they come within ken of the coaſt, or enter into the port, the mariners are ſo vigilant, and ſo intent upon their duty, that they don't expect to be commanded.

You ſee, my lord, by what I have ſaid, that we far ſurpaſs the Chineſe at ſea in the art of navigation; but it muſt be confeſſed that upon rivers and channels they have a particular ſkill that we are not maſters of; they there manage with a few mariners huge barques, as big as our ſhips; and there is ſuch a great number of them in all the ſouthern provinces, that they always keep * nine thouſand nine hundred ninety nine ready equipped amongſt thoſe that are deſigned for the ſervice of the emperor. This is the way the Chineſe uſually reckon; for this way of expreſſing themſelves hath a greater emphaſis in their language, and ſeems to denote ſomething more, than if they ſhould ſay, in one word, that there are ten thouſand of them; it is a hard matter to convict them of an untruth; for really there is ſuch a prodigious number of them, that they cannot be reckoned; they are all flat bottom'd, their ſails and maſts are not much different from thoſe I but juſt now deſcribed, but the model is not the ſame. The body of

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* *Kiou-tchien, Kiou-pé, Kiou-Ché, Kiou.*

of the veſſel, that is alike broad from prow to poop, hath two wells; upon the firſt, or upon the deck, they build, from one end to another, little cabins, that are raiſed above the ſides ſeven or eight feet, or thereabouts; they are painted within and without, varniſh'd, gilded, and all over ſo neat and handſome, that they are capable of making the longeſt voyages ſeem ſhort, tho' ſome they take that laſt four or five months without intermiſſion; for they lodge, they diet, and are always a-board theſe noble barques; and when a good company of Mandarines go together (which pretty often happens) there is no place where they paſs the time away more delightfully. They viſit one another almoſt every day without compliment; they play, they treat one another mutually, as if they were all of a family. This ſociety ſeems ſo much the more acceptable to them, becauſe it is not forced and conſtrained, as in other places, by the incumbrances of nice ceremonies, nor ſubject to ſuſpicions that ſuch a free correſpondence would not fail to foment, if they behaved themſelves ſo in the cities.

Notwithſtanding theſe barques be extraordinary big, and tho' they always be either under ſail, or tugg'd along by ropes, yet do they now and then make uſe of oars, when they are upon great rivers, or croſs lakes. As for ordinary barques, they do not row them after the European manner, but they faſten a kind of a long oar to the poop, nearer one ſide of the barque than to the other, and ſometimes another like it to the prow, that they make uſe of as the fiſh does of its tail, thruſting it out, and pulling it to them again, without ever lifting it above water. This work produces a continual rolling in the barque; but it hath this advantage, that the motion is never interrupted, whereas the time and effort that we employ to lift up our oars is loſt, and ſignifies nothing.

The knack, the Chineſe have to ſail upon torrents, is ſomewhat wonderful and incredible: They in a manner force nature, and make a voyage without any dread, which other people dare not ſo much as look upon without being ſeized with ſome apprehenſion. I ſpeak not of thoſe cataracts they aſcend by meer ſtrength of arm, to paſs from one canal to another, which in ſome relations are called Sluices; but of certain rivers that flow, or rather run headlong quite croſs abundance of rocks, for the ſpace of three or fourſcore leagues. Had I not been upon theſe perillous torrents myſelf, I ſhould have much ado to believe, upon another's report, what I myſelf have ſeen. It is a raſhneſs for travellers to expoſe themſelves, if they have been but never ſo little informed of it; and a kind of madneſs in ſailors to paſs their life in a trade wherein they are every moment in danger of being deſtroyed.

Theſe torrents whereof I ſpeak, which the people of the country call Chan, are met with in ſeveral places of the empire; many of them may be ſeen when one travels from Nancham, the capital city of Kiamſi, to Canton. The firſt time I went that way with father Fontaney, we were hurried away with that rapidity, that all the eneavours of our mariners could not withſtand it; our barque, abandoned to the torrent, was turned round about like a whirlegig for a long time, amongſt the ſinuoſities and windings that the courſe of the water formed; and, at laſt, daſh'd upon a rock even with the water, with that violence, that the rudder, of the thickneſs of a good beam, broke like a piece of glaſs, and the whole body of it was carried by the force of the current upon the rock, where it remained immoveable: If, inſtead of touching at the ſtern, it had hit ſide-ways, we had been infallibly loſt; nor yet are theſe the moſt dangerous places.

In the province of Fokien, whether one comes from Canton, or Hamcheu, one is, during eight or ten days, in continual danger of periſhing. The cataracts are continual, always broken by a thouſand points of rocks, that ſcarce leave breadth enough for the paſſage of the barque; there are nothing but turnings and windings, nothing but caſcades and contrary currents that daſh one againſt another, and hurry the boat along like an arrow out of a bow; you are always within two feet of ſhelves; if you avoid one, you fall foul upon another, and from that to a third, if the pilot, by a ſkill not ſufficiently to be admired, does not eſcape from ſhipwreck that threatens him every moment.

There are none in all the world, beſides the Chineſe, capable of undertaking ſuch like voyages, or ſo much engaged therein, as not to be diſcouraged, maugre all the accidents that befal them, for there paſſes not a day that is not memorable for ſhipwrecks; and, indeed, it is a wonder that all barques do not periſh. Sometimes a man is ſo fortunate as to ſplit in a place not far diſtant from the ſhore, as I chanced twice to do; then indeed one eſcapes by ſwimming, provided one has ſtrength enough to ſtruggle out of the torrent, which is uſually very ſtrait. Other times the barques runs a-drift, and in a moment is upon the rocks, where it remains a-ground with the paſſengers; but, ſometimes it happens, eſpecially in ſome more rapid vortices, that the veſſel is in pieces, and the crew buried before one has time to know where they are. Sometimes alſo, when one deſcends the caſcades formed by the river, that altogether runs head-long, the boats, by falling all on a ſudden, plunge into the water at the prow, without being able to riſe again, and diſappear in a trice. In a word, theſe voyages are ſo dangerous, that, in more than twelve thouſand leagues that I have ſailed upon the moſt tempeſtuous ſeas in the world, I don't believe I ever run through ſo many dangers for ten years, as I have done in ten days upon theſe torrents.

The barques, they make uſe of, are built of a very thin, light timber, which makes it more fit to follow all the impreſſions one has a mind to give them. They divide them into five or ſix apartments, ſeparated by good partitions; ſo that, when they touch at any place, upon any point of a rock, only one part of the boat is full, whilſt the other remains dry, and affords time to ſtop the hole the water has made. For to moderate the rapidity of the motion, in places where the water is not too deep, ſix ſeamen, three on each ſide, hold a long ſpret or pole thruſt to the bottom, wherewith they reſiſt the current; yet, ſlackening by little and little, by the help of a ſmall rope made faſt at one end to the boat, and twined at the other round the pole, that ſlips but very hardly, and by a continual rubbing ſlackens the motion of the barque, which, without this caution, would be driven with too much rapidity; inſomuch, that when the torrent is even and uniform, how rapid ſoever its courſe be, you float with the ſame ſlowneſs, as one does upon the calmeſt canal; but, when it winds in and out, this caution is to no purpoſe; then, indeed, they have recourſe to a double rudder, made in faſhion of an oar, of forty or fifty feet long, one whereof is at the prow, and the other at the poop. In the plying of theſe two great oars conſiſts all the ſkill of the ſailors, and ſafety of the barque; the reciprocal jerks and cunning ſhakes they give it, to drive it on, or to turn it right as they would have it, to fall juſt into the ſtream of the water, to ſhun one rock, without daſhing on another, to cut a current, to purſue the fall of water, without running headlong with it, whirls it about a thouſand different ways: It is not a navigation, it is a Manege; for there is never a managed horſe that labours with more fury under the hands of a maſter of an academy, than theſe boats do in the hands of theſe Chineſe mariners; ſo, that when they chance to be caſt away, it is not ſo much for want of ſkill as ſtrength; and, whereas they carry not above eight men, if they would take fifteen, all the violence of the torrents would not be capable to carry them away. But it is a thing common enough in the world, and eſpecially in China, rather to hazard a man's life, and run the riſk to loſe all he has, than to be at ſmall charges when there is not an abſolute neceſſity for them.

Seeing I am ſpeaking of the art and ſkill of the Chineſe upon rivers, I cannot forbear, my lord, letting you obſerve what they are maſters of in matter of fiſhing; beſides the line, nets, and the ordinary inſtruments we make uſe of in Europe, which they imploy as well as we, they have moreover two ways of catching fiſh, that ſeem to me very ſingular and odd: The firſt is practiſed in the night, when it is moon-ſhine; they have two very long, ſtrait boats, upon the ſides of which they nail, from one end to the other, a board about two feet broad, upon which they have rubb'd white varniſh, very ſmooth and ſhining; this plank is inclined outward, and almoſt toucheth the ſurface of the water: That it may ſerve their turn, it is requiſite to turn it towards the moon-ſhine, to the end that the reflection of the moon may increaſe its brightneſs; the fiſh playing and ſporting, and miſtaking the colour of the plank, for that of the water, jerk out that way, and tumble before they are aware, either upon the plank, or into the boat, ſo that the fiſherman, almoſt without taking any pains, hath in a little time his ſmall barque quite full.

The ſecond manner of fiſhing is yet more pleaſant: They breed, in divers provinces, cormorants, which they order and manage as we do dogs, or even as we do hawks for the game; one fiſherman can very eaſily look after an hundred; he keeps them perched upon the ſides of his boat, quiet, and waiting patiently for orders, till they are come at the place deſigned for fiſhing; then, at the very firſt ſignal that is given them, each takes its flight, and flies towards the way that is aſſigned it. 'Tis a very pleaſant thing to behold how they divide amongſt them the whole breadth of the river, or of the lake; they ſeek up and down, they dive, and come and go upon the water an hundred times, till they have ſpy'd their prey; then do they ſeize it with their beak, and immediately bring it to their maſter. When the fiſh is too big, they help one another interchangeably, one takes it by the tail, another by the head, and go after that manner in company to the boat; the men hold out long oars to them, upon which they perch themſelves with their fiſh, and they ſuffer the fiſherman to take the prey from them, that they may go ſeek for another. When they are weary, they let them reſt a while, but give them nothing to eat till the fiſhing is over; during which time, their throat is tied with a ſmall cord, for fear they ſhould ſwallow the little fiſh, and, when they have filled their bellies, refuſe to work longer.

I forbear ſpeaking, my lord, of their dexterity and neatneſs in the manufactures of ſilk, earthen ware, varniſh and architecture: theſe matters have been exhauſted in publick relations. It is well known, that the ſilks of China are not only handſome, but good and ſerviceable; that their porcelain is of a neatneſs and matter inimitable; that their varniſh, and the uſe they make of it upon their cabinets, tables, and ſkreens, have procured them the admiration of all Europe. As for their architecture, altho' they have therein a fancy far different from ours, and coming ſhort of that perfection that we ſuppoſe ourſelves arrived to: yet muſt it be confeſs'd however, that there are ſome pieces of ſculpture in China perfectly well wrought, and the publick edifices, as gates of great cities, towers, and bridges, have ſomething in them very noble and beautiful. In fine, the Chineſe in point of arts are dexterous, laborious, curious to find out the inventions and contrivances of other nations, and very apt to imitate them. But what is peculiar to them is, that in all their works they perform, with a very few inſtruments and plain engines, what our artificers in *Europe* perform with an infinite number of tools.

The better to give you a character of their ingenuity, I ſhall add, That there is no nation under the ſun, that is more fit for commerce and traffick, and underſtand them better: One can hardly believe how far their tricks and craftineſs proceeds when they are to inſinuate into mens affections to manage a fair opportunity to improve the overtures that are offered: the deſire of getting torments them continually, and makes them diſcover a thouſand ways of gaining, that would not naturally come into their head: every thing ſerves their turn, every thing is precious to the Chineſe, becauſe there is nothing but they know how to improve. They undertake the moſt difficult voyages, for the leaſt hopes of gain, and that's the reaſon why all things are in motion; in the ſtreets, upon the roads, upon the rivers, and all along the coaſts of the maritime towns, you ſhall ſee a world of travellers: the trade and commerce, that is carried on every where, is the ſoul of the people, and the *primum mobile* of all their actions.

If they would accompany labour and natural induſtry with a little more honeſty, eſpecially in reſpect of ſtrangers, nothing could be wanting to them that might contribute to make them able, complete merchants; but their eſſential quality is to deceive and couſen when it lies in their power; ſome of them do not conceal it, but boaſt of it: I have heard of ſome ſo brazen fac'd, that when they have been taken in the fact, to excuſe themſelves by their ſimplicity, ſaid, *You ſee that I don't underſtand trap; you know more of it than I; but perhaps I ſhall be more lucky, or more ſubtle another time.* They falſify almoſt every thing they vend, when things are in a condition to be falſified. They ſay particularly, that they counterfeit gammons of bacon ſo artificially, that many times a man is miſtaken in them; and, when they have boiled them a long time, they find nothing, when they come to eat them, but a large piece of wood under a hog's-ſkin. It is certain, a ſtranger will be always cheated, if he buy alone, let him take what care he will; he ſhould employ a truſty Chineſe, who is acquainted with the country, who knows all the tricks; and, indeed you will be very happy, if he that buys, and he that ſells, do not collogue together to your coſt, and go ſnips in the profit.

When one lends them any thing he muſt have ſureties; for, as for their word, thoſe who know them cannot rely upon it. Some of them have been obſerved to borrow a very ſmall ſum, promiſing to reſtore the principal with vaſt intereſt, which they punctually perform'd upon the day appointed, to gain themſelves the reputation of down-right honeſt men. After that, they demanded a greater ſum, which they repaid alſo without failing. At length, they continued this commerce whole years together, till ſuch time as engaging to credit them, and lend them conſiderable ſums, they carried their money far enough off, and diſappeared for ever.

When they would obtain a favour, they do not diſcover themſelves all on the ſudden; there are ſome who prepare for it whole years before-hand. They make preſents to the maſter, and to all thoſe of the houſhold; they ſeem ſo much the more diſintereſted, and to have no deſign, becauſe they refuſe all returns: but when one has accepted their toys, which they thought they might do, without fearing any bad conſequence, then they begin to ſhew their deſign; when they have ſo well play'd their game, that they cannot in reaſon receive a repulſe for what they demand.

This ſubtlety of deceiving is ſtill more extraordinary in thieves and robbers: They break thro' the thickeſt walls, burn gates, and make great holes in them by the help of a certain engine, which fires the wood without any flame. They penetrate into the moſt private receſſes, without ever being perceived; and, when people awake in the morning, they are amaz'd to find their bed without curtains and coverlets, their chamber unfurniſh'd, tables, cabinets, coffers, and plate, all is march'd off, without ſo much ſometimes as perceiving any foot-ſteps of the thieves, but the hole in the wall at which they went out with all the moveables of the houſe.

When they are apprehended, if they be armed, they ſuffer death; but if, when taken, they are found in no condition to wound or kill any body, they inflict ſome other corporal puniſhment, according to the quality of the goods ſo ſtolen; but, if they have taken nothing, the judges are ſatisfy'd by puniſhing them with thirty or forty blows with a cudgel. They ſay, theſe felons have a certain drug, the fume of which extremely ſtupifies, and caſts into a deep ſleep, which affords them time and opportunity to do their job; and they are ſo perſuaded of that truth, that travellers cauſe a baſon of cold water to be brought into their chamber in the inn, which is a ſure remedy to fruſtrate the power or charm of the fume.

Not but after all one may meet with honeſty and fair-dealing amongſt the Chineſe; for (not to ſpeak of chriſtians, in whom religion hath reformed the evil inclinations of nature) I do remember, that, at my firſt arrival into China with my companions, ſtrangers, unknown, expoſed to the avarice of the Mandarines, not one of them did us the leaſt wrong; and, what appeared yet more extraordinary was, that offering a preſent to a commiſſioner of the cuſtom-houſe, people that are uſually greedy, and attentive to the improvement of ſuch ſort of occaſions, he proteſted, notwithſtanding all our earneſt intreaties, that he would never take any thing of any body ſo long as he was in his office; but, if one day he ſhould chance to be in another condition, he would with all his heart receive from us ſome European curioſity. After all, theſe are rare examples, nor muſt you from them take the character of the natives.

As the Chineſe have a genius for commerce, ſo have they likewiſe for affairs of ſtate; their wit has been a long time adapted to politicks, and negotiating affairs, not with foreigners, whom they look upon as Barbarians, and their ſubjects, whom the ancient haughtineſs of the empire forbids to correſpond with, but amongſt themſelves, according as they are bound by intereſt, or as their fortune engages them therein. There is policy amongſt princes, and other grandees of the realm, as much as in any court of Europe; they continually apply themſelves to know the guſto, inclinations, humours, and deſigns of one another; and they ſtudy it ſo much the more, as they are more reſerved, and, diſſembling themſelves, they keep a fair correſpondence with every body, nay, and even obſerve a decorum with their enemies.

As the way of challenging to duel is not allowed in the ſtate, all their revenge is cunning and ſecret; one cannot imagine by how many ſhifts and contrivances they endeavour to deſtroy one another, without making any ſhow of having any ſuch thing in their head. They are not only diſſemblers, but patient, even to inſenſibleneſs, in expecting a favourable moment to declare themſelves, and to ſtrike home. But as they obſerve all ſorts of meaſures with their enemies, the better to lull them aſleep, ſo they ſometimes huff their beſt friends, for fear, leſt a too ſtrict bond of friendſhip ſhould engage them together in ſome unlucky adventure. So far are they from that barbarous friendſhip that enclines us in Europe to engage thoſe in our private quarrels that are moſt devoted to us, and to expoſe, without any advantage, a life that we ſhould defend, even by the loſs of our own.

The lords of the court, the viceroys of provinces, and generals of armies, are in perpetual motion, to preſerve or acquire the principal places of ſtate; they carry on their buſineſs by money, favour, and by intrigue: and ſince the laws give nothing, either to ſollicitation, riches, or ambition of private perſons, but ſolely to merit, the moſt ſubtle ſeem always moſt moderate, whilſt, in the mean time, by an hundred hidden ſprings, they endeavour to obtain the choice and eſteem of the emperor.

In ſhort, if ſome neighbours more potent and intelligent than the Tartars, had ever been able to have accuſtomed them to make treaties, as the different people of Europe do amongſt themſelves, I am perſuaded, that policy and negotiation would have proved more powerful to defend them from their enemies, than that prodigious wall, of which they endeavoured to make a bulwark, and all thoſe numerous armies wherewith they have hitherto, but all in vain, oppoſed them.

After all that I have ſaid, I leave you to judge, my lord, of the character of theſe people, and of the value that ought to be put upon them; when a man hath a guſt as good as yours, he does not only think of things nicely, but alſo judges of them ſolidly, and with the greateſt exactneſs; ſo that I ſuppoſe, nobody will take it ill that I ſubmit the Chineſe to your cenſure. They only would find ſome difficulty to ſubſcribe to it, if they underſtood the defect of their wit and genius, as much as we underſtand the delicateneſs of yours; but, as they believe themſelves the moſt ſenſible nation in the world, I am ſure they will be glad to be left to the judgment of a perſon, whom all France begins to admire, and, what is more, whom Lewis the Great honours particularly with his eſteem. You will obſerve, my lord, in China, ſome faults which one cannot excuſe; all the favour I beg of you for them is, to reflect, that formerly they have been wiſer, more ſincere, and honeſt, leſs corrupted than they are at preſent. Virtue, which they cultivated with ſo much care, which contributed infinitely to model their reaſon, made them at that time the wiſeſt people of the univerſe; and, being their manners were more regular, ſo, I doubt not, but they were then more intelligent, and more rational.

However, in the very condition wherein they are at preſent, you will, perhaps, eſteem them notwithſtanding, and find withal, that tho' they have not ingenuity enough to be compared with our learned and knowing men in Europe, yet do they not give place to us in arts; that they equal us in politeneſs, and that, perhaps, they may ſurpaſs us in politicks and in government. I am, with the moſt profound reſpect,

My Lord,

Your moſt humble,

and moſt obedient Servant,

L. J.

THE Preſent State OF CHINA.

PART II.

LETTER IX.

To the Cardinal D'Eſtrees.

Of the Policy and Government of the Chineſe.

WHEN I had the honour to give your eminence an account of the preſent ſtate of China, I did a long time doubt whether or no I ſhould venture to deſcribe to you their form of government: To handle ſo nice a ſubject requires the abilities of the moſt exact politician, and a knowledge of ſtate-affairs exquiſite as yours; a ſubject not to be managed by any without pains and trouble, but which lies too deep for thoſe of my character whoſe knowledge in the affairs of this world is ſlight and ſuperficial.

But yet it would be the greateſt of injuries to the Chineſe, to paſs that over in ſilence, which they look upon as the thing to which they owe all their good qualities, and which they eſteem as a maſter-piece of the moſt exact policy; thus therefore, my lord, tho' I ſhould own it a piece of imprudence in me to meddle with theſe myſterious arcana of government, and to ſearch never ſo little into the depths of worldly wiſdom; I could be content to be blamed for it in Europe, if China, to whom I own I bear a kindneſs and reſpect, approve of it in me, and get any credit thereby.

Amongſt the ſeveral models and plans of government which the ancients framed, we ſhall perhaps meet with none ſo perfect and exact as is that of the Chineſe monarchy. The ancient lawgivers of this potent empire formed it in their days very little different from what it is in ours. Other ſtates, according to the common fate of the things of this world, are ſenſible of the weakneſs of infancy, are born miſhapen and imperfect; and, like men, they owe their perfection and maturity to time. China ſeems more exempted from the common laws of nature; and, as though God himſelf had founded their empire, the plan of their government was not a whit leſs perfect in its cradle, than it is now after the experience and trial of four thouſand years.

During all which time the Chineſe had never ſo much as heard of the name of republick; and when lately, on the Hollanders arrival, they heard of it, it ſeemed ſo ſtrange to them that they have ſcarcely yet done admiring at it. Nothing could make them underſtand how a ſtate could regularly be governed without a king; they looked upon a republick to be a monſter with many heads, formed by the ambition, headineſs, and corrupt inclination of men in times of publick diſorder and confuſion.

As they bear an averſion to republican government, ſo are they yet more ſet againſt tyranny and oppreſſion, which they ſay proceeds not from the abſoluteneſs of the prince's power, for they cannot be too much their ſubjects maſters; but from the prince's own wildneſs, which neither the voice of nature, nor the laws of God can ever countenance. The Chineſe are of opinion, that the obligation, which is laid on their kings not to abuſe their power, is rather a means to confirm and eſtabliſh them, than to occaſion their ruin; and that this uſeful conſtraint, which they themſelves lay on their paſſions, does no more diminiſh their power or authority here on earth, than the like conſtraint derogates from the majeſty and power of the Almighty, who is not the leſs powerful becauſe he cannot do evil.

An unbounded authority which the laws give the emperor, and a neceſſity which the ſame laws lay upon him to uſe that authority with moderation and diſcretion, are the two props which have for ſo many ages ſupported this great fabrick of the Chineſe monarchy. The firſt principle thereof, that is inſtilled into the people, is to reſpect their prince with ſo high a veneration as almoſt to adore him. They ſtile him the Son of Heaven, and the only Maſter of the World. His commands are indiſputable, his words carry no leſs authority with them, than if they were oracles; in ſhort, every thing that comes from him is ſacred. He is ſeldom ſeen, and never ſpoken to but on the knees. The grandees of the court, the princes of the blood; nay, his own brothers bow to the ground, not only when he is preſent, but even before his throne; and there are ſet days every week or month, in which the nobility aſſemble, who meet in one of the courts of the palace, to acknowledge the authority of their prince by their moſt ſubmiſſive adorations, tho' he perhaps be not there in perſon.

When he is ill, eſpecially if dangerouſly, the palace is full of Mandarines of every order, who ſpend night and day in a large court, in habits proper for the occaſion, to expreſs their own grief, and to aſk of Heaven their prince's cure. Rain, ſnow, cold, or any other inconveniences excuſe them not from the performance of this duty; and, as long as the emperor is in pain or in danger, any one that ſaw the people would think that they fear nothing but the loſs of him.

Beſides, intereſt is no ſmall occaſion of the great reſpect which is ſhewn him by his ſubjects; for, as ſoon as he is proclaimed emperor, the whole authority of the empire is in his hands, and the good or ill fortune of his ſubjects is owing wholly to him.

Firſt, all places in the empire are in his diſpoſal, he beſtows them on whom he thinks fit; and, beſides, he is to be looked upon as the diſpoſer of them the more, becauſe none of them are ever ſold. Merit, that is, honeſty, learning, long experience, and eſpecially a grave and ſober behaviour, is the only thing conſidered in the candidates, and no other conſiderations can lay any claim to favour. Neither is this all, that he hath the choice of all officers of ſtate; but, if he diſlikes their management when choſen, he diſmiſſes or changes them without more ado. A peccadillo has heretofore been thought enough to render a Mandarine incapable of continuing in his place; and I am told that a governor of one of their cities was turned out, becauſe on a day of audience his cloaths were thought too gay to become the gravity of his office; the emperor thinking a perſon of that humour not fit to fill ſuch a place, or to act as a magiſtrate who repreſents his prince.

I myſelf ſaw at Pekin an example of this ſovereign power, at which I was the more ſurprized becauſe it was brought about with ſo little diſturbance.

It was diſcovered that three Colaos (who are Mandarines as honourable for their places amongſt the Chineſe, as our miniſters of ſtate are amongſt us) had taken money under-hand for ſome ſervices done by them in the execution of their office. The emperor, who was informed of it, took away their ſalaries immediately, and ordered them without farther trouble to retire. What became of the two firſt, or how they were uſed, I cannot tell; but the other, who had a great while been a magiſtrate, and was as much eſteemed for his underſtanding as he was reſpected for his age, was condemned to look after one of the palace gates amongſt other common ſoldiers, in whoſe company he was liſted.

I ſaw him myſelf one day in this mean condition; he was upon duty as a common centinel; when I paſſed by him, I bowed to him, as indeed every one elſe did; for the Chineſe ſtill reſpected in him the ſlender remains of that honour which he had juſt before poſſeſſed.

I muſt confeſs, I ſoon left wondering at ſo ſevere a puniſhment inflicted on ſo great a man; when I ſaw after what manner even the princes of the blood themſelves were uſed. One of them was a mighty lover of ſports, eſpecially of cock-fighting (which is an uſual diverſion in the Eaſt, and the obſtinacy of thoſe creatures, which, armed with gavelocks, fight till they die with an incredible ſkill and courage, is very ſurpriſing.) The emperor did not think it amiſs that this prince ſhould ſpend a few hours in ſuch ſort of diverſions. He knew that great men have ſpare time as well as others, and that it does not derogate from any man's character to throw away an hour or two ſometimes in thoſe diverſions which are more ſuitable to young people, and that it is not at all improper for men of underſtanding and gravity to condeſcend to mean and ordinary ſports, in order to give ſome relaxation and eaſe to their weary ſpirits. Nevertheleſs, he could not bear to ſee him ſpend his whole time in things ſo much below his quality, and ſo unbecoming his years, he therefore told him of it; but, finding that this admonition did not work with him, the emperor reſolved to make an example of him, and did therefore declare, that he had forfeited his title and honour of Prince; he was, beſides, deprived of his retinue, his ſalary, and his quality, until he ſhould, by ſome great and extraordinary action, make it appear to the whole kingdom, that he was not unworthy of the blood from whence he ſprang.

The emperor went yet a ſtep farther, for perceiving that the number of the princes of the blood was very great, and that the ill conduct of many of them might in time bring their quality into contempt; he publiſhed an order, that none ſhould hereafter bear that character, without his expreſs leave, which he gave to none, but to thoſe, who, by their virtue, underſtanding, and diligence in their offices, did very well deſerve it.

Such adminiſtrations in Europe would cauſe heart-burnings and factions in the ſtates; but in China they are brought about without any the leaſt diſturbance, theſe changes create no manner of trouble if they are done for the publick good, and not from a perſonal hatred or violent paſſion; however, if the emperor ſhould be ſo far tranſported as to act thus to ſatisfy his own paſſion, yet, if his government be generally equitable and juſt, ſuch particular ill adminiſtrations raiſe no faction in his ſubjects againſt him.

You will have a plain proof of the abſoluteneſs of the emperor's power, from a paſſage which happened in a late war with one of the kings of Tartary. The emperor ſent a mighty army under his brother's command, to puniſh the vanity and raſhneſs of that puny king, who had dared to make inroads into the countries of ſeveral of the allies of the empire. The Tartar, whoſe warlike troops ſought only an opportunity of ſignalizing themſelves, advanced to engage the imperial army, and ſet upon them with ſo much violence and vigour, that at laſt, notwithſtanding he was ſo much inferior to them in number, he beat them from their ground, and forced them to retreat in diſorder.

The emperor's father-in-law, an old Tartar, well vers'd in the trade of war, commanded the artillery, and plaid his part ſo well that he was killed at the head of a few, yet brave ſoldiers, whom he encouraged as well by his example as by his words ; but the general was accuſed of flying firſt, and drawing by his flight the reſt of the army after him. The emperor, who is himſelf a man of courage, and an admirer of glory, was leſs troubled at the loſs of the battle, than he was at that of his brother's honour. He ſent for him immediately to court, to be tried before a council of the blood, whom he aſſembled in his palace.

The prince, who was on all other accounts a perſon of ſingular merit, ſurrendered himſelf with the ſame humility and ſubmiſſion, as he could have done, had he been the meaneſt officer in the army, and, without ſtaying till ſentence was pronounc'd, he condemned himſelf, and owned that he deſerved death. *You deſerve it*, ſaid the emperor, *but you ought to recover your loſt honour, to ſeek your death in the midſt of the enemies troops, and not here amongſt us in the midſt of Pekin, where it can only increaſe your diſgrace.* At laſt, the emperor was inclinable to pardon him ; but the princes, who thought themſelves in ſome meaſure diſgraced by this action, earneſtly begged of the emperor to uſe the utmoſt of his power to puniſh him ; and his uncle, who aſſiſted at the council,

cil treated him with ſo much ſcorn and contempt, that amongſt us ſuch uſage would afflict any gentleman ſo ſenſibly as to go near to break his heart.

The emperor, who has power over the lives of the princes of the blood, can certainly diſpoſe of his other ſubjects: The laws make him ſo far maſter of their lives, that neither viceroy, nor parliaments, nor any other ſovereign court throughout the whole empire, can execute any criminal without expreſs order from court. They are arraigned and tried up and down in the ſeveral provinces, but the ſentence is always preſented to the emperor, who either confirms it or rejects it as he pleaſes; moſt an end he agrees to it, but he very often cuts off part of the ſentence, and makes it leſs rigorous.

Secondly, altho' every one be perfect maſter of his eſtate, and enjoys his lands free from diſturbance and moleſtation: the emperor can nevertheleſs lay what taxes he thinks fit upon his ſubjects to ſupply the preſſing wants, and relieve the neceſſities of the ſtate. This power indeed he ſeldom makes uſe of; whether it be, that the ſtanding revenue and ordinary taxes are ſufficient to maintain a war abroad; or, whether it be, that in a civil war they are unwilling to run the hazard of provoking their ſubjects too much, by laying too great a load on them. They have likewiſe a cuſtom of exempting every year one or two provinces from bearing their proportion in the tax, eſpecially if any of them have ſuffered thro' the ſickneſs of the people, or, if the lands, thro' unſeaſonable weather, have not yielded ſo good an increaſe as uſual.

It is true, that the ſubſidies, which the laws grant, are ſo conſiderable, that, were the Chineſe leſs induſtrious, or their lands leſs fruitful, this empire, like the reſt of the Indian kingdoms, would be only a ſociety of poor and miſerable wretches. It is this prodigious income that makes the prince ſo powerful, and that enables him, at an hour's warning, to raiſe a potent and a numerous army to keep his people in obedience.

It is very difficult to reckon what the revenue of this empire amounts to; becauſe, beſides the money that is raiſed in ſpecie, vaſt ſums are paid in in goods. After the beſt examination which I could get both from the officers and from their books, I believe the treaſury receives in money about 22,000,000 of Chineſe crowns, which the Portugueſe call Taëls, each of which in our money comes to about ſix ſhillings. But the rice, corn, ſalt, ſilks, cloaths, varniſh, and a hundred other commodities which they pay in, together with the cuſtoms and forfeited eſtates, amount to more than 50,000,000 of the Chineſe crowns. So that, after having allow'd for the goods received into the treaſury, their value in ſilver, and having made the neareſt and moſt exact calculation poſſible, I find the ordinary revenues of the emperor to amount in our money to 21,600,000 *l.* at leaſt.

Thirdly, the right of making peace and war is the emperor's, he may make treaties on what conditions he pleaſes, provided they be not ſuch as are diſhonourable to the kingdom. As for the judgments which he himſelf paſſes, they are irrevocable, and, to have them put in execution, he need only ſend them to his ſovereign courts or viceroys, who dare not in the leaſt delay regiſtering and publiſhing them. When, on the other hand, the ſentences, pronounced by their parliaments or other magiſtrates, are no ways obligatory till approved and confirmed by the emperor.

Fourthly, another inſtance of his ſupreme authority is this, that he has the liberty of making choice of his ſucceſſor, which he may not only chuſe from the royal family, but from amongſt his other ſubjects. This ancient right hath been heretofore put in practice with ſo much impartiality and wiſdom, as would be admirable even in a prince who to his other titles hath that of Moſt Chriſtian. For ſome of theſe emperors, finding none of their family, tho' numerous, able to ſupport the weight of a crown, chuſe for their ſucceſſors perſons mean as to their birth and fortunes, but eminent for their virtue, and admirable for their underſtanding; ſaying that they acted thus not only from a deſire of their kingdoms good, but alſo out of reſpect to the honour and credit of their own children, for whom it would be more glorious to live privately, than to ſit upon a throne expoſed to the cenſure, and oftentimes to the curſes of all their people. *If*, ſaid they, *a lofty title could create merit in thoſe who had it not before, we ſhould indeed injure our children in excluding them from the crown. But ſince it ſerves only to publiſh and ſpread their defects more abroad, we think ourſelves obliged, by the kindneſs and tenderneſs which we bear to them, to keep them from that ſhame and diſgrace which a crown would neceſſarily expoſe them to.*

However, examples of this nature have been very ſeldom known, for the emperors, for many ages, have bounded their choice within the compaſs of their own families; yet they do not always chuſe the eldeſt. He, who now reigns with ſo much wiſdom, was a younger brother; and ſees his elder brother as dutiful, and free from ambition as the meaneſt of his ſubjects. The great number of princes of the blood is with us in Europe as great an occaſion of fears and jealouſies, but in China it is quite otherwiſe, for, at the death of the laſt emperor of China, there were above ten thouſand princes up and down the ſeveral provinces, yet was there no confuſion or diſorder in the leaſt; which could certainly proceed from nothing but the exceſſive authority of this emperor, who finds as little trouble in China in governing a multitude of princes, as other princes do in governing the common people.

Furthermore, the emperor, after he has made choice of, and publickly owned who ſhall be his ſucceſſor, may afterwards exclude him, and renew his choice; but not unleſs he have very good reaſon for doing ſo, nor unleſs the ſovereign courts of Pekin do in a manner give their conſent to it; for if he act thus, without obſerving theſe methods, it would not only raiſe the people's tongues, but perhaps their hands againſt him.

Fifthly, the grave itſelf cannot put an end to his power over his ſubjects, which is exerciſed even over the dead, whom he either diſgraces or honours (as much as if they were alive) when he hath a mind either to reward or puniſh themſelves or their families. He makes ſome after their deceaſe dukes, others counts, and confers upon them ſeveral other titles, which our language knows no name for. He may canonize them as ſaints, or, as they ſpeak, may make them naked ſpirits. Sometimes he builds them temples, and if their miniſtry hath been very beneficial, or their virtues very eminent, he commands the people to honour them as gods. Paganiſm hath for many ages authoriſed and countenanced this abuſe of religion; yet this reparation religion has from the empire of China for the forementioned injury, that, ever ſince the foundation of this empire, the emperor has been always looked upon as the chief prieſt and principal ſervant of religion; for there are ſome ceremonies, and publick ſacrifices, which he alone is thought worthy to offer up to the great Creator of heaven.

Sixthly, there is another inſtance, which, tho' of eſs importance than the preceding, yet may ſerve as well as them to ſhew how unlimited the authority of this emperor is. It is this, the emperor hath power to change the figure and character of their etters, to aboliſh any characters already received, or to form any new one. He may likewiſe change the names of provinces, of cities, of families: he may likewiſe forbid the uſing of any expreſſion or manner of ſpeaking, he may forbid the uſe of ſome expreſſions which are generally received, and may bring into uſe and practice thoſe ways of ſpeaking which have been looked upon as obſolete and uncouth, and this either in common diſcourſe or in writing. So that cuſtom which exerciſes ſo unalterable an authority over the ſignification of words, that the Greek and Roman powers were too little to ſubdue it, and which for that reaſon hath by ſome been called a fantaſtical and an unjuſt tyrant, equally commanding both princes and common people; this cuſtom, I ſay, of which even in Europe we complain ſo much, is ſubmiſſive and humble in China, and is content to alter and give way when the emperor commands.

One would imagine that this unlimited power ſhould often occaſion very unfortunate events in the government, and indeed it ſometimes hath, as nothing in this world is without its alloy of inconvenience. Yet ſo many are the proviſions, and ſo wiſe the precautions which the laws have preſcribed to prevent them, that a prince muſt be wholly inſenſible of his own reputation, and even intereſt, as well as of the publick good, who continues long in the abuſe of his authority.

For, if he hath any regard for his reputation, there are three things which will prevail with him to govern by juſtice and not paſſion. Firſt, the old lawgivers have from the firſt foundation of the government made this a ſtanding maxim, that kings are properly the fathers of their people, and not maſters placed in the throne only to be ſerved by ſlaves. Wherefore it is that in all ages their emperor is called Grand-father, and, of all his titles of honour, there is none which he likes to be called by ſo well as this †.

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† *Ta-fou.*

This idea of their prince is ſo deeply imprinted in the minds of his people, and of his Mandarines, that, when they make any panegyrick in the praiſe of their emperor, it is upon the topick of his affection to his people. Their teachers and their philoſophers conſtantly ſet forth in their books, that the ſtate is but a large family, and that he, who knows how to govern the one, is the beſt capable of ruling the other; ſo that, if the prince neglects never ſo little the practice of this maxim, he may be a good warrior, an able politician, a learned prince, and yet meet with little or no eſteem from his people. They do not form their character of their prince from theſe or ſuch like qualities, his reputation increaſes or diminiſhes with them, in proportion, as he is or is not a father to them.

Secondly, every Mandarine may tell the emperor of his faults, provided it be in ſuch a ſubmiſſive manner, as is agreeable to that veneration and profound reſpect which is due to him; the manner they uſually take to bring it about is this: The Mandarine, who perceives any thing in the emperor's management diſagreeable to their conſtitution or laws, draws up a requeſt, in which, after having ſet forth the reſpect, which he bears towards his imperial majeſty, he moſt humbly prays his prince, that he will pleaſe to reflect upon the ancient laws and good example of thoſe holy princes his predeceſſors: afterwards he takes notice wherein he apprehends, that his prince hath deviated from them.

This requeſt lies upon a table, among many other petitions which are daily preſented, and which the emperor is obliged to read: if he does not hereupon change his conduct, he is put in mind of it again, as often as the Mandarine hath zeal and courage to do it, for they had need of a great deal of both who dare venture thus to expoſe themſelves to their prince's indignation.

A little before I arrived at Pekin, one who had an office in that court, which is appointed for the inſpection into the mathematicks, had the courage to adviſe the emperor in the aforeſaid manner, concerning the education of the prince his ſon, ſetting forth, that, inſtead of breeding him up to learning and knowledge, his tutors made it their whole care and endeavour to make him expert in the buſineſs of war, to ſhoot with the bow, and to manage his arms. Another let the emperor know, that he went too often from his palace, and, that contrary to the cuſtoms of the ancient kings, he made too long ſtays in Tartary. This prince, who was one of the moſt haughty, as well as the moſt politick governors that ever ſat in the throne, ſeemed to pay ſome deference and reſpect to their advice. Nevertheleſs, ſince theſe his journies into Tartary contributed much to the preſerving his health, the princes of his houſhold begged of him to regard that more than the idle whimſies of particular men.

As for the mathematician who had troubled himſelf with what did not belong to him, the education of the prince, he was turned out of his office, and the reſt of his fellow-officers, tho' they had no hand in the buſineſs, were deprived of a year's ſalary. This method hath been practiſed for a long time in China, and their hiſtories take notice, that no means has been found ſo powerful as this to oblige their emperors, when they act amiſs, to return to their duty, altho' this means proves often dangerous to thoſe particular perſons who make uſe of it.

Thirdly, if their princes have any regard for their reputation, the manner, in which their hiſtories are wrote, is alone ſufficient to keep them within bounds. A certain number of men, who for their learning and impartiality are purpoſely choſen for this affair, remark, with all the exactneſs poſſible, not only all their prince's actions, but alſo his words; each of theſe perſons by himſelf, and without communication with the others, as things fall out, ſets them down in a looſe paper, and puts theſe papers thro' a chink into an office ſet apart for this purpoſe. In theſe papers both the emperor's virtues and faults are ſet down with the ſame liberty and impartiality. *Such a day*, ſay they, *the prince's behaviour was unſeaſonable and intemperate, he ſpoke after a manner which did not become his dignity. The puniſhment which he inflicted on ſuch an officer was rather the effect of his paſſion, than the reſult of his juſtice. In ſuch an affair he ſtopp'd the ſword of juſtice, and partially abrogated the ſentence paſſed by the magiſtrates.* Or elſe, *He enter'd courageouſly into a war for the defence of his people, and for the maintenance of the honour of his kingdom. At ſuch a time he made an honourable peace. He gave ſuch and ſuch marks of his love to his people. Notwithſtanding the commendations given him by his flatterers, he was not puffed up, but behaved himſelf modeſtly, his words were tempered with all the ſweetneſs and humility poſſible; which made him more loved and admired by his court than ever.* And in this manner they ſet down every thing that occurs in his adminiſtration.

But that neither fear on the one ſide, nor hope on the other, may byaſs theſe men to a partiality in the account they give of their prince, this office is never opened during that prince's life, or while any of his family ſit in the throne. When the crown goes in another line, which often happens, all theſe looſe memoirs are gathered together, and, after they have compared them, to come to the more certain knowledge of the truth, they from them compoſe the hiſtory of that emperor, to propoſe him as an example to poſterity, if he have acted wiſely, or to expoſe him to the common cenſure and odium of the people, if he have been negligent of his own duty and his people's good. When a prince loves honour and glory, and ſees that it is not in the power of flattery and impoſture to perſuade the people to give it him, he will then be circumſpect and cautious how he behaves himſelf during the whole reign.

Intereſt, which has a far greater command over ſome tempers than the love of reputation, is as great a motive to the emperor to be guided by the ancient cuſtoms, and to adhere to the laws. They are ſo wholly made for his advantage, that he cannot violate them without doing ſome prejudice to his own authority; nor can he make new and unuſual laws, without expoſing his kingdom to the danger of change and confuſion. Not that the grandees of his court, or his parliaments, how zealouſly ſoever they may ſeem to aſſert their ancient cuſtoms, are eaſily provoked to a revolt, or to make uſe of their prince's government, as an occaſion to diminiſh his authority. Altho' there are ſome examples of this in hiſtory, yet they ſeldom occur, and, whenever they do, it is under ſuch circumſtances as ſeem to go a great way towards their juſtification.

But ſuch is the temper of the Chineſe, that when their emperor is full of violence and paſſion, or very negligent of his charge, the ſame ſpirit of perverſeneſs poſſeſſes alſo his ſubjects. Every Mandarine thinks himſelf the ſovereign of his province or city, when he does not perceive it taken care of by a ſuperior power. The chief miniſters ſell places to thoſe who are unfit to fill them. The viceroys become ſo many little tyrants. The governors obſerve no more the rules of juſtice. The people by theſe means oppreſſed and trampled under foot, and by conſequence miſerable, are eaſily ſtirred up to ſedition. Rogues multiply and commit inſolences in companies; and in a country, where the people are almoſt innumerable, numerous armies do in an inſtant get together, who wait for nothing but an opportunity, under ſpecious pretences, to diſturb the publick peace and quiet.

Such beginnings as theſe have occaſioned fatal conſequences, and have oftentimes put China under the command of new maſters. So that the beſt and ſureſt way for an emperor, to eſtabliſh himſelf in his throne, is to give an exact regard and an intire obedience to thoſe laws, whoſe goodneſs hath been confirmed by the experience of more than four thouſand years.

This is the ordinary form of government which the laws preſcribe. The emperor hath two ſovereign councils; the one is called the extraordinary council, and is compoſed of princes of the blood only; the other, called the council in ordinary, has, beſides the princes, ſeveral miniſters of ſtate, named Colaos, admitted into it. Theſe are they who examine all the affairs of ſtate, and make their report to the emperor, from whom they have their final determination. Beſides theſe, there are at Pekin ſix ſovereign courts, whoſe authority extends over all the provinces of China; each of theſe courts have their different matters aſſigned to them, of which they are to take cogniſance: the names of them, and what is committed to their judgment, are as follows.

The court, called Lipou, preſides over all the Mandarines, and does give them, and take away from them their offices. That called Houpou looks after the treaſury, and takes care of raiſing the taxes. That called Lipou is to look after the ancient cuſtoms; to this court is alſo committed the care of religion, of ſciences and arts, and of foreign affairs. That called Pimpou has charge over the ſoldiery and its officers. That called Himpou takes cogniſance of all criminals. That called Compou looks after all publick buildings, and all the emperor's houſes and palaces. Each of theſe courts is divided in ſeveral offices, ſome of them into fifteen; the principal of which offices is managed by the preſident and two aſſiſtants, who have the final inſpection into thoſe things which come under the notice of that court; the reſt are under offices, and conſiſt of a preſident and ſeveral counſellors, all of which are ſubject to the preſident of the principal office, from whom there is no appeal.

But becauſe it is the emperor's intereſt to keep ſuch conſiderable bodies as theſe ſo far under, as that it may not lie in their power to weaken the emperor's authority, or to enterpriſe any thing againſt the ſtate; care is taken, that tho' each of theſe ſix courts have their particular charges of which they are conſtituted ſole judges, yet no conſiderable thing can be brought to perfection and maturity without the joint help and mutual concurrence of all theſe courts. I explain myſelf by the inſtance of war: the number of the troops, the quality of their officers, the march of their armies, are provided for by the fourth court, but the money to pay them muſt be had from the ſecond; ſo that ſcarce any one thing of conſequence to the ſtate can be promoted without the inſpection of many, and oftentimes of all the Mandarines.

The ſecond means uſed by the emperor, for this purpoſe, is to place an officer in each of theſe courts, who has an eye to all their proceedings. He is not, it's true, of the council, yet he is preſent at all their aſſemblies, and informed of all their proceedings; we may call this officer an Inſpector. He either privately advertiſes the court, or elſe openly accuſes the Mandarines of the faults which they commit in their private capacities, as well as of thoſe which they commit in the execution of their office. He obſerves their actions, their behaviour, and even their words, ſo that nothing eſcapes his notice. I am told, that he, who once undertakes this employ, can never quit it for any other, that ſo the hopes of a better preferment may never tempt him to be partial to any one, nor the fear of loſing his place frighten him from accuſing thoſe who misbehave themſelves. Of theſe officers, whom they call Colis, even the princes of the blood ſtand in awe; and I remember that one of the greateſt of the nobility, having built a houſe ſomewhat higher than the cuſtom of China ſuffers, did of himſelf pull it down in a few days, when he had heard that one of theſe inſpectors talked of accuſing him.

As for the provinces, they are under the immediate inſpection of two ſorts of viceroys. One ſort has the government of one province only. Thus there is one viceroy at Pekin, at Canton, or at Nankim, or in any other town but a little diſtant from the chief city of the province. Beſides this, theſe provinces are under the governmnt of other viceroys, who are called Tſounto, and have under their juriſdiction two, or three, nay ſometimes four provinces. There is no prince in Europe whoſe dominions are of ſo large extent as is the juriſdiction of theſe general officers; yet, how great ſoever their authority may ſeem to be, they do in no wiſe diminiſh that of the particular viceroys; and each of theſe two viceroys have their particular right ſo well ſettled and adjuſted, that they never claſh or contend with each other in their adminiſtrations.

Theſe have all of them in their ſeveral lordſhips many courts, of the ſame nature with thoſe at Pekin already deſcribed, but are ſubordinate to them, ſo that from theſe they appeal to them: there are beſides theſe ſeveral other inferior offices for the preparing buſineſs, or for finiſhing it according to the extent of their commiſſions. There are three ſorts of towns, each of which have their particular governor, and a great number of Mandarines who adminiſter juſtice; amongſt which cities there is this difference, that thoſe of the third ſort or rank are ſubordinate to thoſe of the ſecond, as thoſe of the ſecond are to them of the firſt; theſe of the firſt rank are ſubject to the juriſdiction of the general officers of the capital cities, according as the nature of things requires, and all the judges, be their quality what it will in the civil government, have their dependence on the viceroy, in whom reſides the imperial authority. He, from time to time, convenes the principal Mandarines of his province, to take cogniſance of the good or bad qualities of the governors, lieutenants, and even inferior officers: he ſends private diſpatches to court to inform the emperor who misbehave themſelves, who are either therefore deprived of their offices, or elſe cited to appear and offer what they have to ſay in their juſtification.

On the other hand, the viceroy's power is counterpoiſed by that of the great Mandarines, who are about him, and who may accuſe him when they are ſatisfied that it is neceſſary for the publick good. But that which principally keeps him upon his guard is, that the people, when evil intreated or oppreſſed by him, may petition the emperor in perſon for his removal, and that another may be ordered them. The leaſt inſurrection or diſturbance is laid at his door, which, if it continues three days, he muſt anſwer for at his peril. It is his fault, ſay the laws, if diſturbances ſpring up in his family, that is, in the province over which he has the charge. He ought to regulate the conduct of the Mandarines under him, that ſo the people may not ſuffer by their ill management. When people like their maſters, they do not deſire to change them; and, when the yoke is eaſy, it is a pleaſure to bear it.

But becauſe private perſons cannot eaſily come at the court, and becauſe the juſt complaints of his people cannot always reach the ears of their prince, (eſpecially in China where the governors eaſily corrupt with bribes the general officers, and they the ſupreme courts;) the emperor diſperſes up and down ſecret ſpies, perſons of known wiſdom and reputation; theſe in every province, by their cunning management, inform themſelves from the countrymen, tradeſmen, or others, after what manner the Mandarines behave themſelves in the execution of their offices. When from their private, but certain informations, or rather when by the publick voice, which ſeldom impoſes on us, they are acquainted with any diſorder, then they publickly own their commiſſion from the emperor; they take up thoſe criminal Mandarines, and manage the cauſe againſt them. This heretofore kept all the judges to their duty; but, ſince the Tartars have been maſters of China, theſe officers have been laid aſide; inaſmuch as ſome of them abuſed their commiſſion, enriching themſelves by taking money of the guilty to conceal their faults, and of the innocent, whom they threatened to accuſe as criminal. Nevertheleſs, that ſo uſeful a means of keeping the magiſtrates to their duty may not be wholly loſt, the emperor himſelf, who has a tender love for his ſubjects, hath thought it his duty to viſit in perſon each province, and to hear himſelf the complaints of his people; which he performs with ſuch a diligence as makes him the terror of his Mandarines, and the delight of his people. Amongſt the great variety of accidents which have happened to him during thoſe his progreſſes, they report, that, being once ſeparated from his attendants, he ſaw an old man weeping bitterly, of whom he inquired, what was the occaſion of his tears. Sir, ſaid the old man, who did not know to whom he ſpoke, I had but one ſon, who was the comfort of my life, and on whom lay the whole care of my family, a Mandarine of Tartary has deprived me of him; which hath made me helpleſs at preſent, and will make me ſo as long as I live; for how can I, who am ſo poor and friendleſs, oblige ſo great a man as he, to make me reſtitution? That's not ſo difficult as you imagine, ſaid the emperor; get up behind me, and direct me to his houſe, who has done you this wrong. The good man complied without any ceremony,

mony, and in two hours time they both got to the Mandarine's houſe, who little expected ſo extraordinary a viſit. In the interim the guards, and a great company of lords, after a great deal of ſearch made, came thither; ſome of which attended without, others entered with the emperor, not knowing what the buſineſs was which brought him there. Where the emperor, having convicted the Mandarine of the violence of which he was accuſed, condemn'd him on the ſpot to death; afterwards turning round to the afflicted father who had loſt his ſon: To make you a good recompence for your loſs, ſays he, after a grave and ſerious manner, I give you the office of the criminal who is juſt now dead; but take care to execute it with equity, and let his puniſhment, as well as his crime, prove for your advantage, for fear leſt you in your turn are made an example to others.

They have ſtill a farther means to oblige the viceroys, and other governors, to a ſtrict care of their charge, which expedient I do not believe any government or kingdom, tho' never ſo ſevere, did ever yet make uſe of. It is this, every governor is obliged from time to time, with all humility and ſincerity, to own and acknowledge the ſecret or publick faults committed by himſelf in his adminiſtration, and to ſend the account in writing up to court. This is a more troubleſome buſineſs to comply with, than one readily imagines, for on one ſide it is an uneaſy thing to accuſe ourſelves of thoſe things which we know will be puniſhed by the emperor, tho' mildly. On the other ſide, it is more dangerous to diſſemble them; for, if by chance they are accuſed of them in the inſpector's advertiſement, the leaſt fault, which the Mandarine ſhall have concealed, will be big enough to turn him out of his miniſtry. So that the beſt way is to make a ſincere confeſſion of one's faults, and to purchaſe a pardon for them by money, which in China has the vertue of blotting out all crimes, which remedy notwithſtanding is no ſmall puniſhment for a Chineſe ; the fear of ſuch a puniſhment makes him oftentimes exceeding circumſpect and careful, and ſometimes even virtuous againſt his own inclinations.

After theſe proviſions, which the laws make, as I have ſaid, they give the following directions how to proceed in the buſineſs of puniſhing criminals. There is no need of having a warrant to carry them before the magiſtrate, nor that the magiſtrate ſhould ſit in a court of juſtice to hear the accuſation and plea of the criminal. Such formalities as theſe are not inſiſted on there. Wherever the magiſtrate ſees a fault, there he has power to puniſh it on the ſpot, be it in the ſtreet, in the highway, or in a private houſe, it is all one ; he may take up a gameſter, a rook, or a debauchee, and without more formalities he orders ſome of his attendants to give him twenty or thirty ſtripes : after which, as tho' nothing extraordinary had happened, he goes on his journey without any concernment. Notwithſtanding this puniſhment, the perſon damaged may accuſe the ſame criminal again in a ſuperior court, where he is tried, the reſult of which is uſually a farther puniſhment.

Farther, the plaintiff may in common caſes bring his action in any higher magiſtrate's court, even before it has been pleaded in an inferior court. I mean, an inhabitant of a town of the firſt rank may forthwith apply himſelf to the governor of the capital city of the province, or even to the viceroy, without having it examined before the governor of his own town ; and, when it once comes before a ſuperior judge, the inferior ones may not take cogniſance of it, unleſs it be deputed to them by thoſe ſuperior judges, as it often is. When the cauſe is of great conſequence, there lies an appeal from the viceroy to one of the ſupreme courts at Pekin, according to the nature of the affair, where the cauſe is examined in one of the under offices, who make their report to the preſident of the ſupreme office, who gives ſentence after he has adviſed with his aſſiſtants, and communicated his opinion to the Colaos, who carry it to the emperor. Sometimes the emperor deſires better information, ſometimes gives ſentence on the ſpot, and in his name the ſupreme court makes a brief of the ſentence, and ſends it to the viceroys for them to put it in execution. A ſentence pronounced in this manner is irrevocable, they call it the Holy Commandment; that is to ſay, the commandment, which is without defect or partiality.

You will think it doubtleſs an inconceivable thing, that a prince ſhould have time to examine himſelf the affairs of ſo vaſt an empire as is that of China. But beſides that wars and foreign negotiations never ſpend his time, which in Europe is almoſt the ſole buſineſs of the councils; beſides this, I ſay, their affairs are ſo well digeſted and ordered, that he can with half an eye ſee to which party he ought to incline in his ſentence, and this becauſe their laws are ſo plain, that, they leave no room for intricacy or diſpute. So that two hours a day is time enough for that prince to govern himſelf an empire of that extent, that were there other laws, might find employment for thirty kings; ſo true it is, that the laws of China, are wiſe, plain, well underſtood, and exactly adequate to the particular genius and temper of that nation.

To give your eminence a general notion of this, I ſhall think it ſufficient to remark to you three things, which are exceeding conducive to the publick peace, and are as it were the very ſoul of the government. The firſt is the moral principles which are inſtilled into the people. The ſecond is the political rules which are ſet up in every thing. The third is the maxims of good policy which are, or ought to be every where obſerved.

The firſt moral principle reſpects private families, and injoins children ſuch a love, obedience, and reſpect for their parents, that neither the ſeverity of their treatment, the impertinency of their old age, nor the meanneſs of their rank, when the children have met with preferment, can ever efface. One can't imagine to what a degree of perfection this firſt principle of nature is improved. There is no ſubmiſſion, no point of obedience which the parents can't command, or which the children can refuſe. Theſe children are obliged to comfort them when alive, and continually to bewail them when dead. They proſtrate themſelves a thouſand times before their dead bodies, offer them proviſions, as tho' they were yet alive, to ſignify that all their goods belong to them, and that from the bottom of their hearts they wiſh them in a capacity to enjoy them. They bury them with a pomp and expence which to us would ſeem extravagant, they pay conſtantly at their tombs a tribute of tears, which ceremonies they often perform even to their pictures, which they keep in their houſes with all imaginable care, which they honour with offerings, and with as due a reſpect as they would their parents, were they yet alive. Their kings themſelves are not excuſed this piece of duty, and the preſent emperor has been obſervant of it, not only to his predeceſſors of his own family, but even to thoſe who were not. For one day, when in hunting he perceived afar off the magnificent monument which his father had erected for Tcoumtchin, the laſt Chineſe emperor, who loſt his life and crown in a rebellion, he ran to the place, and fell on his knees before the tomb, and even wept, and in a great concern for his misfortune: *O prince!* ſays he, *O emperor worthy of a better fate! you know that your deſtruction is no ways owing to us; your death lies not at our door, your ſubjects brought it upon you. It was them that betrayed you. It is upon* *them, and not on my anceſtors, that Heaven muſt ſend down vengeance for this act.* Afterwards he ordered flambeaux to be lit, and incenſe to be offered. During all which time he fixed his countenance on the ground, and aroſe not till all theſe ceremonies were over.

The ordinary term of mourning is three years, during which time the mourner can exerciſe no publick office; ſo that a Mandarine is obliged to forſake his employ, and a miniſter of ſtate his office, to ſpend all that time in grief. If a father be honoured after his death as a god, to be ſure he is obeyed in his family like a prince, over whom he exerciſes a deſpotick power; as abſolute maſter not only of his eſtate, which he diſtributes to whom he pleaſes, but alſo of his concubines and children, of whom he diſpoſes with that liberty and power, that he may ſell them to ſtrangers when their behaviour diſpleaſes him. If a father accuſes his ſon of any crime before a Mandarine, there needs no proof of it; it's ſuppoſed to be true, that the ſon is in the fault if the father be diſpleaſed. This paternal power is of that extent, that there is no father, but may take his ſon's life away, if he will ſtick to his accuſation. When we ſeemed amazed at this procedure, we were anſwered: Who underſtands the merit of the ſon better than the father, who has brought him up, educated him, and ſuch a long time obſerved all his actions? And again, can any perſon have a greater love, or a more ſincere affection for him? If therefore he who knows the caſe exactly, and loves him tenderly, condemns him, how can we pronounce him guiltleſs and innocent? And when we objected, that ſome perſons have an inbred diſlike of others, and that fathers who were men, as well as fathers, were capable of ſuch antipathies againſt ſome of their children; they anſwered, that men were not more unnatural than ſavage beaſts, the cruelleſt of which never deſtroyed their young ones for a frolick; but ſuppoſing there be ſuch monſters among men, their children, by their modeſty and ſweetneſs of temper, muſt tame and ſoften them. But after all, ſay they, the love of their children is ſo deeply imprinted in the hearts of parents, that antipathy, or diſlike, unleſs provoked and inflamed by the undutiful ſtubbornneſs and diſorderly behaviour of their children, can never eraſe.

If it ſhould happen that a ſon ſhould be ſo inſolent as to mock his parents, or arrive to that height of fury and madneſs as to lay violent hands on them; it is the whole empire's concern, and the province where this horrible violence is committed is alarmed. The emperor himſelf judges the criminal. All the Mandarines near the place are turned out, eſpecially thoſe of that town, who have been ſo negligent in their inſtructions. The neighbours are all reprimanded for neglecting, by former puniſhments, to ſtop the iniquity of this criminal before it came to this height; for they ſuppoſe that ſuch a diabolical temper as this muſt needs have ſhewed itſelf on other occaſions, ſince it is hardly poſſible to attain to ſuch a pitch of iniquity at once. As for the criminal there is no puniſhment which they think too ſevere: They cut him into a thouſand pieces, burn him, deſtroy his houſe to the ground, and even thoſe houſes which ſtand near it, and ſet up monuments and memorials of this ſo horrible an inſolence.

Even the emperors themſelves can't reject the authority of their parents, without running the riſque of ſuffering for it; and hiſtory tells us a ſtory which will always make the affection which the Chineſe have to this duty appear admirable. One of the emperors had a mother who managed a private intrigue with one of the lords of the court; the notice, which was publickly taken of it, obliged the emperor to ſhew his reſentment of it, both for his own honour and that of the empire; ſo that he baniſhed her into a far diſtant province; and becauſe he knew that this action would not be very acceptable to his princes and Mandarines, he forbad them all, under pain of death, giving him advice therein. They were all ſilent for ſome time, hoping that of himſelf he would condemn his own conduct in that affair; but, ſeeing that he did not, they reſolved to appear in it, rather than ſuffer ſo pernicious a precedent.

The firſt, who had the courage to put up a requeſt to the emperor in this matter, was put to death on the ſpot. His death put not a ſtop to the Mandarines proceedings; for a day or two after another made his appearance, and, to ſhew all the world that he was willing to ſacrifice his life for the publick, he ordered his hearſe to ſtand at the palace gate. The emperor minded not this generous action, but was the rather more provoked at it. He not only ſentenced him to death, but, to terrify all others from following his example, he ordered him to be put to the torture. One would not think it prudence to hold out longer. The Chineſe were of another mind, for they reſolved to fall one after another rather than baſely to paſs over in ſilence ſo baſe an action.

There was therefore a third who devoted himſelf, he, like the ſecond, ordered his coffin to be ſet at the palace gate, and proteſted to the emperor that he was not able any longer to ſee him ſtill guilty of his crime. *What ſhall we loſe by our death*, ſays he, *nothing but the ſight of a prince, upon whom we can't look without amazement and horror. Since you will not hear us, we will go and ſeek out yours and the empreſs your mother's anceſtors. They will hear our complaints, and perhaps in the dark and ſilence of the night you will hear ours and their ghoſts reproach you with your injuſtice.*

The emperor being more enraged than ever at this inſolence, as he called it, of his ſubjects, inflicted on this laſt the ſevereſt torments he could deviſe. Many others, encouraged by theſe examples, expoſed themſelves to torment, and did in effect die the martyrs of filial duty, which they ſtood up for with the laſt drop of their blood. At laſt this heroick conſtancy wearied out the emperor's cruelty; and whether he was afraid of more dangerous conſequences, or was himſelf convinced of his own fault; he repented, as he was the father of his people, that he had ſo unworthily put to death his children; and as a ſon of the empreſs, he was troubled that he had ſo long miſuſed his mother. He recalled her therefore, reſtored her to her former dignity, and after that, the more he honoured her, the more was he himſelf honoured of his ſubjects.

The ſecond moral principle, which obtains among them, is to honour their Mandarines as they would the emperor himſelf, whoſe perſon the Mandarines repreſent. To retain this credit the Mandarines never appear in publick without a retinue, and face of grandeur that commands reſpect. They are always carried in a magnificent chair open; before them go all the officers of their courts, and round them are carried all the marks and badges of their dignity. The people, wherever they come, open to the right and left to let them paſs thro'. When they adminiſter juſtice in their palaces, no body ſpeaks to them but on their knees, be they of what quality they will, and ſince they can at any time command any perſons to be whipped, no one comes near them without trembling.

Heretofore, when any Mandarine took a journey, all the inhabitants of the towns thro' which he paſſed ran in a crowd to meet him, and proffer their ſervices, conducting him with all ſolemnity thro' their territory: now when he leaves his office which he has adminiſter'd to the ſatisfaction of all men, they give him ſuch marks of honour, as would engage the moſt ſtupid to the love of virtue and juſtice. When he is taking his leave in order to lay down his office, almoſt all the inhabitants go in the highways, and place themſelves ſome here, ſome there, for almoſt fourteen or fifteen miles together; ſo that every where in the road one ſees tables handſomely painted, with ſattin table-cloths, covered with ſweet-meats, tea, and other liquors.

Every one almoſt conſtrains him to ſtay, to ſit down and eat or drink ſomething. When he leaves one, another ſtops him, and thus he ſpends the whole day among the applauſes and acclamations of his people: and, which is an odd thing, every one deſires to have ſomething which comes from off him. Some take his boots, others his cap, ſome his great coat; but they, who take any thing, give him another of the ſame ſort, and, before he is quit of this multitude, it ſometimes happens that he has had thirty different pairs of boots on.

Then he hears himſelf called publick benefactor, the preſerver and father of his people. They bewail the loſs of him with wet eyes; and a Mandarine muſt be very inſenſible indeed, if he does not in his turn ſhed a tear or two, when he ſees ſuch tender marks of affection: for the inhabitants are not obliged to ſhew him this reſpect, and, when they do not like the adminiſtration of a governor, they ſhew themſelves as indifferent at his departure, as they do affectionate and ſorry at the loſs of a good one.

The extraordinary reſpect which children pay to their parents, and people to their governors, is the greateſt means of preſerving quietneſs in their families, and peace in their towns; I am perſuaded that all the good order, in which we ſee ſo mighty a people, flows from theſe two ſprings.

The third principle of morality eſtabliſhed among them is this, that it is very neceſſary that all people ſhould obſerve towards each other the ſtricteſt rules of modeſty and civility; that they ſhould behave themſelves ſo obligingly and complaiſantly, that all their actions may have a mixture of ſweetneſs and courteſy in them. This, ſay they, is that which makes the diſtinction between man and beaſt, or between the Chineſe and other men; they pretend alſo that the diſturbance of ſeveral kingdoms is owing to the rough and unpoliſhed temper of their ſubjects. For thoſe tempers, which fly out into rudeneſs and paſſion, perpetually embroiled in quarrels, which uſe neither reſpect nor complaiſance towards any, are fitted to be incendiaries and diſturbers of the publick peace. On the contrary, people who honour and reſpect each other, who can ſuffer an injury, and diſſemble or ſtifle it; who religiouſly obſerve that difference which either age, quality, or merit have made; a people of this ſtamp are naturally lovers of order, and when they do amiſs it is not without violence to their own inclinations.

The Chineſe are ſo far from neglecting the practice of this maxim, that in ſeveral inſtances they carry it on too far. No ſort of men are excuſed from it; tradeſmen, ſervants, nay, even countrymen have their ways of expreſſing kindneſs and civility to one another; I have often been amazed to ſee footmen take their leave of each other on their knees, and farmers in their entertainments uſe more compliments and ceremonies than we do at our publick treats. Even the ſeamen, who from their manner of living, and from the air they breathe, naturally draw in roughneſs, do yet bear to each other a love like that of brothers, and pay that deference to one another, that one would think them united by the ſtricteſt bands of friendſhip.

The ſtate, which has always, in policy, accounted this as moſt conducive to the quiet of the empire, has appointed forms of ſalutation, of viſiting, of making entertainments, and of writing letters. The uſual way of ſalutation is to lay your hand croſs your breaſt, and bow your head a little. Where you would ſtill ſhew a greater reſpect, you muſt join your hands together, and carry them almoſt to the ground, bowing your whole body; if you paſs by a perſon of eminent quality, or receive ſuch an one into your houſe, you muſt bend one knee, and remain in that poſture till he whom you thus ſalute takes you up, which he always does immediately. But when a Mandarine appears in publick, it would be a criminal ſaucineſs to ſalute him in any ſort of faſhion, unleſs you have occaſion to ſpeak to him: you muſt ſtep aſide a little, and holding your eyes on the ground, and your arms croſs your ſides, ſtay till he be gone paſt you.

Altho' very familiar acquaintance make viſits without any ceremony, yet for thoſe friends, who are not ſo, cuſtom has preſcribed a ſet form of viſiting. The viſitor ſends his ſervant before with a piece of red paper, on which is wrote his own name, and a great many marks of reſpect to the perſon he viſits, according as his dignity or quality is. When this meſſage is received, the viſitor comes in, and meets with a reception anſwerable to his merit. The perſon viſited ſometimes ſtays for the viſitor in the hall, without going out to meet him, or if he be of a much ſuperior quality, without riſing from his ſeat; ſometimes he meets the viſitor at his door; ſometimes he goes out into the court-yard, and ſometimes even into the ſtreet to bring him in. When they come into view, they both run and make a low bow. They ſay but little, their compliments are in form, one knows what he muſt ſay, and the other how he muſt anſwer; they never beat their brains, like us, to find out new compliments and fine phraſes. At every gate they make a halt where the ceremonies begin afreſh, and the bows are renewed to make each go firſt; they uſe but two ways of ſpeaking on this occaſion, which are Tſin; that is, Pray be pleaſed to enter; and Poucan, It muſt not be.

Each of them repeats his word four or five times, and then the ſtranger ſuffers himſelf to be perſuaded, and goes on to the next door, where the ſame thing begins anew.

When they come to the room where they are to ſtay, they ſtand near the door on a row, and every one bows almoſt to the ground; then follow the ceremonies of kneeling, and going on this or that ſide to give the right hand, then the chairs are ſaluted (for they have their compliments paid them as well as the men, they rub them to take all duſt away, and bow in a reſpective manner to them) then follow the contentions about the firſt place; yet all this makes no confuſion. Uſe has made it natural to the Chineſe, they know before what themſelves, and what others are to do; every one ſtays till the others have done in their order what is expected, ſo that there happens no confuſion or diſturbance.

It muſt be owned that this is a great piece of fatigue, and after ſo many motions and different poſtures, in which they ſpend a quarter of an hour before they are to ſit down, it muſt be own'd they have need enough of reſt. The chairs are ſet ſo that every body ſits oppoſite to one another; when you are ſat, you muſt ſit ſtraight, not lean back, your eyes muſt look downward, your hands muſt be ſtretched on your knees, your feet even, not acroſs, with a grave and compoſed behaviour, not be over-forward to ſpeak. The Chineſe think that a viſit conſiſts not in mutual converſe ſo much as in outward compliment and ceremony, and in China the viſitor may truly and properly ſay he comes to pay his reſpects, for oftentimes there are more honours paid than words ſpoken.

A miſſionary did aver to me, that a Mandarine made him a viſit, in which he ſpoke never a word to him. This is always certain, that they never overheat themſelves with diſcourſing, for one may generally ſay of them, that they are ſtatues or figures placed in a theatre for ornament, they have ſo little of diſcourſe and ſo much of gravity.

Their ſpeech is mightily ſubmiſſive and humble, you will never hear them ſay, for example, *I am obliged to you for the favour you have done me*, but thus, *the favour which my lord*, *which my inſtructor has granted to me*, *who am little in his eyes*, or *who am his diſciple*, *has extremely obliged me.* Again, they don't ſay, *I make bold to preſent you with a few curioſities of my country*; but *the ſervant takes the liberty to offer to his lord a few curioſities which came from his mean and vile country.* Again, not *Whatſoever comes from your kingdom or province is well worked*; but *whatſoever comes from the precious kingdom*, *the noble province of the lord*, *is extraordinary fine*, *and exceeding well wrought.* In like manner in all other caſes, they never ſay I or you in the firſt or ſecond perſon; but *me your ſervant*, *me your diſciple*, *me your ſubject.* And inſtead of ſaying *you*, they ſay, *the doctor ſaid*, *the lord did*, *the emperor appointed.* It would be a great piece of clowniſhneſs to ſay otherwiſe, unleſs to our ſervants.

During the viſit the tea goes round two or three times, where you muſt uſe a ceremony when you take the diſh, when you carry it to your mouth, or when you return it to the ſervant. When you depart it is with the ſame ceremonies with which you came in, and you conclude the comedy with the ſame expence you began it. Strangers are very uncouth at playing their parts herein, and make great blunders. The reaſonable part of the Chineſe ſmile at them and excuſe them; others take exceptions at it, and deſire them to learn and practiſe before they venture in publick: for this reaſon they allow ambaſſadors forty days to prepare for their audience of the emperor; and, for fear they ſhould miſs any ceremony, they ſend them, during the time allowed, maſters of the ceremonies, who teach them, and make them practiſe.

Their feaſts are ceremonious even beyond what you can imagine, you would think they are not invited to eat, but to make grimaces. Not a mouthful of meat is eat, or a drop of wine drank but it coſts an hundred faces. They have, like our concerts of muſick, an officer who beats time, that the gueſts may all together in concord take their meat on their plates, and put it into their mouths, and lift up their little inſtruments of wood, which ſerve inſtead of a fork, or put them again in their places in order. Every gueſt has a peculiar table, without tablecloth, napkin, knife, or ſpoon; for every thing is ready cut to their hands, and they never touch any thing but with two little wooden inſtruments tipp'd with ſilver, which the Chineſe handle very dexterouſly, and which ſerve them for an univerſal inſtrument.

They begin their feaſts with drinking wine, which is given to every gueſt at one and the ſame time in a ſmall cup of China or ſilver, which cup all the gueſts take hold of with both hands: every one lifts his veſſel as high as his head, preſenting their ſervice thereby to one another without ſpeaking, and inviting each other to drink firſt. It is enough if you hold the cup to your mouth only without drinking during the time while the reſt drink; for, if the outward ceremonies are obſerved and kept, it is all one to them whether you drink or not.

After the firſt cup, they ſet upon every table a great veſſel of haſh'd meat, or Ragoo. Then every one obſerves the motions of the maſter of the feaſt, who directs the actions of his gueſts. According as he gives the ſign, they take their two little inſtruments, brandiſh them in the air, and, as it were, preſent them, and after exerciſing them after twenty faſhions, which I can't expreſs, they ſtrike them into the diſh, from whence they cleaverly bring up a piece of meat, which muſt be eat neither too haſtily nor too ſlowly, ſince it would be a rudeneſs either to eat before others, or to make them ſtay for you.

Then again they exerciſe their little inſtruments, which at length they place on the table in that poſture wherein they were at firſt. In all this, you muſt obſerve time, that all may begin and end at once.

A little after, comes the wine again, which is drank with all the ceremonies aforeſaid. Then comes a ſecond meſs, which they dip into as into the firſt, and thus the feaſt is continued until the end, drinking between every mouthful, till there have been twenty or four and twenty different plates of meat at every table, which makes them drink off as many cups of wine; but, we muſt obſerve, that beſides that, I have ſaid, that they drink as much or as little as they will at a time, their wine cups are very little, and their wine is ſmall.

When all the diſhes are ſerved, which are done with all imaginable order, no more wine is brought, and the gueſts may be a little more free with their meat, taking indifferently out of any of theſe diſhes before them, which yet muſt be done when the reſt of the gueſts take out of ſome of their diſhes, for uniformity and order is always ſacred. At this time they bring rice and bread, for, as yet, nothing but meat has been brought; they bring likewiſe fine broths, made of fleſh or fiſh, in which the gueſts, if they think fit, may mingle their rice.

They ſit at table ſerious, grave, and ſilent, for three or four hours together. When the maſter of the houſe ſees they have all done eating, he gives the ſign to riſe, and they go aſide for a quarter of of an hour into the hall or garden to entertain and divert themſelves. Then they come again to the table, which they find ſet out with all ſorts of ſweetmeats, and dry'd fruits, which they keep to drink with their tea.

Theſe cuſtoms, ſo ſtrictly enjoin'd, and ſo extremely troubleſome, which muſt be performed from one end to the other of the feaſt, keeps all the gueſts from eating, who do not find themſelves hungry till they ariſe from the table. Then they have a great mind to go and dine at home; but a company of ſtrollers come and play over a comedy, which is ſo tedious, that it wearies one as much as that before at the table did. Nor is tedіouſneſs the only fault, for they are commonly very dull and very noiſy; no rules are obſerved, ſometimes they ſing, ſometimes bawl, and ſometimes howl, for the Chineſe have little ſkill in making declamations. Yet, you muſt not laugh at this folly, but all the while admire at the politeneſs of China, at its ceremonies, inſtituted, as they ſay, by the diſcretion of the ancients, and ſtill kept up by the wiſdom of the moderns.

The letters, which are wrote from one to another, are as remarkable for their civilities and ceremonies, which are as many, and as myſterious as the others. They don't write in the ſame manner as they ſpeak; the bigneſs of the characters, the diſtance between the lines, the innumerable titles of honour given to the ſeveral qualities of perſons, the ſhape of the paper, the number of red, white, or blue covers for the letter, according to the perſon's condition, and a hundred other formalities, puzzle ſometimes the brain of the moſt underſtanding men amongſt them, for there is ſcarce any one who is ſecretary enough to write and ſend one of their letters as it ought to be.

There are a thouſand other rules practiſed by the better ſort in ordinary converſation, which you muſt obſerve, unleſs you would be accounted a clown; and tho' in a thouſand inſtances theſe things ſavour more of a ridiculous affectation than of real politeneſs, no one can deny nevertheleſs, but that theſe cuſtoms, which people obſerve ſo exactly, do inſpire into them a ſweetneſs of temper, and a love of order. Theſe three moral principles, that is, the reſpect which children pay their parents, the veneration which all pay the emperor and his officers, and the mutual humility and courteſy of all people, work their effect the better, becauſe, ſupported by a wiſe and well-underſtood policy. The principal maxims of which are, my lord, as follow.

The firſt is, Never to give any one an office in his own province, and that for two reaſons : becauſe, firſt, a Mandarine of ordinary parentage is uſually deſpiſed by thoſe who know his family. Secondly, becauſe being brought into favour and repute, by the great number of his kindred and friends, he might be enabled either to make, or to ſupport a rebellion, or at leaſt it would be very difficult for him to execute juſtice with an univerſal impartiality.

The ſecond maxim is, To retain at court the children of the Mandarines imploy'd in the moſt conſiderable offices in the province, under pretence indeed of educating them well, but, in reality, keeping them as hoſtages, leſt their fathers ſhould fall from that duty which they owe the emperor.

The third maxim is, That, when one goes to law, ſuch a commiſſary is made uſe of as the emperor pleaſes to name, unleſs the office or quality of the criminal gives him the liberty to refuſe him. If the emperor diſlikes the firſt ſentence, he may commiſſion new judges to re-examine it until the ſentence be agreeable to his mind ; for, otherwiſe, it would be in the power of money or artifice, to ſave a man whoſe life would be noxious to the good of the ſtate. On the other ſide, ſay they, we need not fear the prince's paſſion, who, if he have a mind to take off a good man, may find ways enough to do it, without going ſo openly about it. But it is but fitting that there ſhould be a means efficacious enough to rid the empire of an ill man.

The fourth maxim of policy is Never to ſell any place, but to beſtow it always upon merit; that is, to thoſe of good life, and who by a diligent ſtudy have acquainted themſelves with the laws and cuſtoms of their country. To this end, informations are exhibited of the life and manners of the candidate, eſpecially when a Mandarine is removed from an inferior to a ſuperior office; as for their underſtanding the laws, they undergo ſo many examinations and trials of it, that it is impoſſible for an ignoramus to be thought underſtanding, ſo ſevere are the meaſures which they take.

When they reſolve to ſet a child apart for learning, they put him to a maſter, for the towns of China are full of ſchools, where reading and writing are taught, which, to learn well, will take up ſome years. When the youth has made a pretty good progreſs in this, he is preſented to a Mandarine of the lower order to be examined. If he writes a good hand, and makes their characters handſomely, he is admitted among thoſe who apply themſelves to the knowledge of books, and endeavour to obtain a degree; of which there are three ſorts, which anſwer to our batchelor, maſter of arts, and doctor. As the fortunes of the Chineſe do wholly depend upon their capacity and underſtanding, ſo they ſpend their whole life in ſtudy. They ſay by heart all their ſtaple books with a wonderful alacrity, they make comments on their laws: compoſition, eloquence, imitation and knowledge of their ancient doctors, and the delicacy and politeneſs of the modern ones, from ſix to ſixty, are their conſtant employ. In ſome, the quickneſs and readineſs of wit ſaves them a great deal of labour, for ſome have been doctors at an age when others can write but indifferently; but theſe are heroes amongſt the Chineſe, of which one in an age is enough.

The examinations are ſtrict, maſters of arts are created by the principal Mandarines of the province; batchelors, by thoſe Mandarines aſſiſted by a commiſſary from court; as for doctors, they commence only at Pekin: but becauſe ſome, who deſerve this degree, have not wherewith to defray ſo expenſive a journey, what is neceſſary for it is beſtowed on them *gratis*, that ſo poverty may not deprive the ſtate of the ſervice of thoſe men who may prove uſeful and beneficial to it.

Every one's character is taken from his ability to invent or compoſe. For this purpoſe, the candidates are ſhut up in a cloſe room, without books, without any other paper than what is neceſſary for them to write on. All the while they are forbidden all manner of correſpondents, at the doors are placed by the Mandarines guards, whoſe fidelity no bribes can corrupt; the ſecond examination is yet more ſtrict, for, leſt the commiſſary ſent by the court ſhould himſelf be byaſſed thro' favour or the hopes of gain, he is not ſuffered to ſee or ſpeak with any perſon till the examination is over.

In creating the doctors, the emperor often engages himſelf; the preſent emperor is more feared by the candidates than any of the other poſers, not only for his nice exactneſs and rigorous juſtice, but for his extraordinary abilities in judging of any thing of this nature. When the doctors are named, they are preſented to him; to three principal of which he gives garlands of flowers, or any other mark of honour, to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt; ſome of them likewiſe he chuſes for members of his royal academy, from whence they never remove, unleſs into poſts of the greateſt conſideration and credit in the kingdom.

The great number of preſents, which they receive from their kindred and friends, keeps the doctors from being poor. Every one hopes to make ſome advantage from his friendſhip; but, leſt high promotion ſhould make them negligent, and ſit looſe to their ſtudies, they ſtill undergo ſeveral examinations, where, if they appear to have been negligent, they certainly meet with ſeverity and reproof; whereas, if they have ſtill continued to forward and improve their ſtudies, they meet with a ſuitable encouragement and reward.

No ſmall ſhare of the publick good is owing to this principle of policy. The youths, whom idleneſs and ſloth never fail to corrupt, are by this conſtant employment diverted from ill courſes, they have ſcarce time enough to follow their looſe inclinations. Secondly, ſtudy forms and poliſh their wits. People, who never engage in arts and ſciences, are always blockiſh and ſtupid. Thirdly, all offices are fill'd by able men, and, if they can't prevent that injuſtice which proceeds from the covetouſneſs and corrupt affections of officers, at leaſt, they will take care to hinder that which ariſes from ignorance and immorality. Fourthly, ſince the places are given, the emperor may with greater juſtice turn out thoſe officers whom he ſhall find undeſerving. We ought indeed to puniſh every offender; yet, it would be natural to bear with a Mandarine who is negligent of his office for want of underſtanding or application, who is too mild or over ſevere, if, if taking away his place would ruin his family, whoſe whole fortune, it may be, was laid out in the purchaſe of it, when as, if a place be diſpos'd only by donation, the prince who gave it, may eaſily, without any diſturbance, take it from one and gratify another with it.

Laſtly, no fees are paid for the adminiſtration of juſtice. The judge, whoſe office coſt him nothing, and who has his ſalary ſtated, can require nothing of the parties at law; which impowers every poor man to proſecute his own rights, and frees him from being oppreſſed by the opulence of his adverſary, who can't be brought to do juſtly and reaſonably, becauſe the other has not money.

The Chineſe have eſtabliſhed this as a fifth maxim of policy Never to ſuffer ſtrangers to have any ſhare in their adminiſtration: the ſmall eſteem, they bear them, makes the Chineſe uſe them ſo coarſly. They fancy, that a mixture of natives and foreigners would bring them to contempt, and occaſion nought but corruption and diſorder. From thence alſo would ſpring particular grudges, making parties, and, at laſt, rebellions. For difference of people neceſſarily ſuppoſes difference of cuſtoms, languages, humour, and religion. This makes them no longer children of the ſame family, bred up to the ſame opinions, and tempered with the ſame notions; and, be there all imaginable care uſed in inſtructing and forming ſtrangers, they are at moſt but adopted ſons, who never have that implicit obedience and tender affection, which children by nature bear to their own parents. So, that ſhould foreigners be better qualified than natives, which you can never make the Chineſe believe, they would fancy it for the good of their country to prefer natives to them; and it is little leſs than a miracle in favour of chriſtianity, that a few miſſionaries have been ſuffered to ſettle there.

This laſt piece of policy is extremely good, when thoſe of a falſe religion are kept out, which teaches rebellion and diſturbance, itſelf being the product of caballing and riot; but the caſe is otherwiſe in chriſtianity, whoſe humility, ſweetneſs, and obedience to authority produces nought but peace, unity, and charity among all people. This is what the Chineſe begin to be convinced of, having had trial of it for a whole age together. Happy were it, if they would embrace it as a conſtitution equally neceſſary for the ſalvation of their ſouls, as conducive to the peace and good of the ſtate.

Their ſixth maxim is, That nobility is never hereditary, neither is there any diſtinction between the qualities of people; ſaving what the offices, which they execute, makes; ſo that, excepting the family of Confucius, the whole kingdom is divided into magiſtracy and commonalty. There are no lands but what are held by ſoccage tenure, not even thoſe lands which are deſtined for the Bonzes, or which belong to the temples of the idols; ſo that their gods, as well as men, are ſubjected to the ſtate, and are obliged by taxes and contributions to acknowledge the emperor's ſupremacy. When a viceroy or governor of a province is dead, his children, as well as others, have their fortunes to make; and, if they inherit not their father's virtue and ingenuity, his name which they bear, be it never ſo famous, gives them no quality at all.

The advantages which the ſtate makes of this maxim are, firſt, trading is in a more flouriſhing condition, which the lazineſs of the nobility is the likelieſt means to ruin. Secondly, the emperor's revenues are encreas'd by it; becauſe no eſtates are tax-free. In towns which pay poll-money, no perſon is exempt. Thirdly, by this means, families are hindered from ingratiating themſelves with the populace, and ſo kept from eſtabliſhing themſelves ſo far in the people's favour, that it would be a difficulty to the prince himſelf to keep them within bounds. Laſtly, it is a received opinion among the Chineſe, that, if an emperor would be obey'd, he muſt lay his commands upon ſubjects, and not upon ſo many little kings.

Their ſeventh principle of policy is, To keep up in peace as well as war great armies, as well to maintain a credit and reſpect from the neighbours, as to ſtifle, or rather prevent any diſturbance or

inſurrection

inſurrection which may happen at home. Heretofore a million of ſoldiers were ſet to guard their great wall. A leſs number than that alſo, to garriſon their frontiers and great towns, would have been too little. Now they think it enough to keep garriſons in their moſt important towns.

Beſides theſe ſtanding forces, there are fifteen or twenty thouſand men in each province, under the command of private officers; they have alſo ſoldiers to keep their iſlands, eſpecially Haynan and Formoſa. The horſe-guards of Pekin are above an hundred and ſixty thouſand; ſo that, I believe, in the greateſt and ſecureſt peace, the emperor has in pay and at muſter no leſs than fifty hundred thouſand effective men, all armed according to the cuſtom of the country with ſcimeters and darts. They have but a very ſmall infantry, and of thoſe, which they have there, there are no pikemen, and very few muſqueteers.

Their ſoldiers are very graceful, and pretty well diſciplin'd, for the Tartars have almoſt degenerated into Chineſe, and the Chineſe continue as they always were, ſoft, effeminate, enemies of labour, better at making an handſome figure at muſter or in a march, than at behaving themſelves gallantly in an action. The Tartars begin with heat and briſkneſs, and, if they can make their enemies give ground in the beginning, then they can make their advantage of it; otherwiſe they are unable to continue an attack a good while, or to bear up long againſt one, eſpecially, if made in order and with vigour. The emperor, whom I have had the honour to ſpeak with, who ſays nothing but what is proper, as he does nothing but what is great, gave this ſhort character of them: *They are good ſoldiers when oppoſed to bad ones, but bad when oppoſed to good ones.*

The eighth maxim is concerning their rewards and puniſhments. Great men, who have faithfully ſerved their country, never loſe their reward; and becauſe, be a prince never ſo opulent, he can never have enough to reward all his ſubjects: this defect is made up by marks and titles of honour, which are very acceptable to the ſubjects, and no charge to the prince.

Theſe titles of honour are what they call the ſeveral Orders of Mandarines. They ſay, ſuch an one is a Mandarine of the firſt rank, or the emperor has placed ſuch an one in the firſt claſs of the Mandarines, of the ſecond rank, and in like manner of others. This dignity, which is meerly honorary, makes them take place in aſſemblies, viſits, and councils, but is no profit to them. To make theſe rewards of greater extent, which the people chuſe much ſooner than penſions, they are ſometimes beſtow'd even upon the dead, who are oftentimes made Mandarines after their funerals, who therefore fill ſometimes the greateſt places of honour amongſt the nobility when the emperor can't beſtow upon them the meaneſt place amongſt the living. They have oftentimes, at the publick or prince's charge, lofty monuments raiſed for them, and that court, which looks after the publick expences, judges what recompence ſhall be paid to their deſert. Theſe rewards are oftentimes accompanied with elogies in their praiſe, made by the emperor himſelf, which makes them and their family famous to all poſterity. But the higheſt honour is to make them ſaints, to build them temples, and offer them ſacrifices as to the gods of the country. By this means, paganiſm has been mightily ſupported by the emperors, adoring themſelves the work of their own hands, and paying worſhip and honour to them, who, when alive, would have been glad to be proſtrate at their now worſhippers feet.

They reward alſo in private men thoſe virtuous actions which bring no publick advantage to the ſtate. We read in hiſtory, that temples have been raiſed to the memory of ſome maids, who all their lives kept their chaſtity inviolable. And I myſelf have ſeen, in ſeveral of their towns, trophies with honourable inſcriptions, raiſed up for inhabitants of mean rank and degree, to publiſh to all the world their virtue and merit.

If the Chineſe are very liberal in their rewards, they are as ſevere in the puniſhments even of the ſlighteſt faults; their puniſhments are adequate to their demerits. The uſual puniſhment is the baſtinado on the back. When they receive but forty or fifty blows, they call this a Fatherly Correction; to which as well Mandarines, as others, are ſubject. This puniſhment is not accounted very ſcandalous, and, after it is executed, the criminal muſt fall on his knees before the judge, and, if able, bow three times down to the ground, and give him humble thanks for taking this care of his education.

Yet this puniſhment is of that violence, that one ſtroke is enough to fell one that is of a tender conſtitution, and oftentimes perſons die of it; it is true, there are ways of ſoftening this puniſhment, when the execution of it is in court. The eaſieſt is to to bribe the executioners, for there are many of them; becauſe, leſt the executioner's wearineſs ſhould leſſen the puniſhment, after five or ſix ſtrokes another ſucceeds, and ſo till the whole be perform'd. But, when the criminal has by money made them his friends, they underſtand their buſineſs ſo well, that, notwithſtanding all the care which the Mandarines preſent can uſe, the puniſhment becomes light and almoſt nothing.

Beſides this, in the courts there are perſons to be hired, who keep a good underſtanding with the officers; who, upon a ſignal given, take the place of the criminal, who eſcapes among the croud, and receives his puniſhment. For money, there are every where theſe ſorts of vicarious perſons to be met with;

for it is a trade at China, where ſeveral perſons are maintained by the blows of the cudgel.

By ſuch a trick as this, Yam qùam-ſien, a famous proſecutor of chriſtianity, eſcaped the juſt ſentence of the judges. He engaged a paltry fellow for a large ſum of money, to take upon him his name, and go to the court of juſtice in his ſtead. He told him, that, let it come to the worſt, it was but a good cudgelling, and, if after that he was impriſoned, there ſhould be found out a way to redeem him thence. The poor fellow went according to agreement, and when the cryer call'd out aloud, Yam quam-ſien, the fellow anſwered as loud, Here ; his ſentence was paſs'd, and the Mandarine condemned him to death. The officers, who had been bribed, ſeized on him immediately, and, according to cuſtom, gagged him ; for, after ſentence, the criminal is not ſuffered to ſpeak. Afterwards, he was brought to to the place of execution, where the poor wretch ſuffered a miſerable death.

The ſecond ſort of puniſhment is the Carcan, which differs from the former only in the place where the baſtinadoes are given ; in this, they are given the criminal at one of the city gates, or in the high way : the puniſhment here is not ſo ſharp, but the infamy is greater, and he, who has once undergone this puniſhment, can never more recover his reputation.

They have ſeveral different ways of inflicting death. Mean and ignoble perſons have their heads cut off, for, in China, the ſeparation of the head from the body is diſgraceful. On the contrary, perſons of quality are ſtrangled, which, among them, is a death of more credit ; if the crime be very notorious, they are puniſhed like mean perſons, and ſometimes their heads are cut off and hang'd on a tree in the high ways.

Rebels and traytors are puniſh'd with the utmoſt ſeverity ; that is, to ſpeak as they do, they cut them into ten thouſand pieces : for, after that the executioner hath ty'd them to a poſt, he cuts off the ſkin all round their forehead, which he tears by force till it hangs over their eyes, that they may not ſee the torments they are to endure. Afterwards, he cuts their bodies in what places he thinks fit, and, when he is tir'd with this barbarous employment, he leaves them to the tyranny of their enemies, and the inſults of the mob.

Often criminals are cruelly whipp'd till they expire. Laſtly, the torture which is the cruelleſt of all deaths is here uſed; and generally the hands and fingers ſuffer moſt in it.

Ninthly, They think it good policy to forbid women from all trade and commerce, which they can only benefit by letting it alone; all their buſineſs lies within doors, where they find continual employment in the careful education of their children. They neither buy nor ſell, and one ſees women ſo ſeldom in the ſtreets, that one would imagine them to be all religiouſes confined to a cloyſter. Princeſſes never ſucceed to the crown, nor ever have the regency during the young prince's minority; and, tho' the emperor may in private conſult them, it is reckoned mean and ignoble to do it. In which thing the Chineſe ſeem, in my opinion, leſs reaſonable than in others. For wit and foreſight is equally the portion of the one as of the other ſex; and a prince is never ſo underſtanding as when he knows how to find out all his treaſures whereſoever nature has placed them, nor ever ſo prudent as when he makes uſe of them.

Laſtly, their tenth maxim is, To encourage trade as much as poſſible thro' the whole empire. All the other policy is conducive to the plenty or convenience of their country; but this is concerned for the very lives of the people, who would be ſoon reduced to the laſt extremity if trade ſhould once fail. It is not the people's care only, but the Mandarines alſo, who put out their money to truſty traders to make the beſt advantage of it. By this private way, Ouſanguey, the little king of Xenſi, who brought the Tartars into China, made himſelf ſo rich and powerful, that he was able himſelf to ſupport for a long time the war againſt the emperor.

To increaſe commerce, foreigners have been permitted to come into the ports of China, a thing till lately never known. On the other ſide, the Chineſe ſpread themſelves all over the Indies, where they carry ſilk, china, phyſical drugs, ſugar, japanned works, wine, and potters ware. They go to Batavia, Siam, to Achim, Malacca, and eſpecially to Jappon, and Manilla; from which, they are diſtant but a few days ſail. From all theſe places they bring ſilver, all of which, that is brought from Mexico to the Philippine iſlands by the Pacifick ocean, is carried from thence to Canton, whence it is ſpread thro' the whole empire.

But the greateſt part of their trading lies within themſelves, from one province to another, which like ſo many kingdoms communicate to each other their riches. That of Huquam ſends rice, that of Canton ſugar, from Chequiam comes good ſilk, from Nankim neat and handſome pieces of workmanſhip; Xenſi and Xanſi are rich in iron, horſes, mules, camels, and firs. Tokiem yields tea, Leaotum drugs, and ſo the reſt. This mutual commerce unites the people, and fills their towns with plenty. Theſe, my lord, are not all the Chineſe maxims, there are a world of others, but I have wrote down theſe as the moſt known and moſt eſſential ones for the publick good.

Good order in the inferior governments is as uſeful a part of policy to the ſtate as any whatever, by theſe inferior governments, I mean thoſe of the cities, and of the ſeveral camps. All theſe are ſettled in China; for, from the foundation of that empire, the ſtate has thought it worth while to look after even the moſt inconſiderable things.

Among perſons of quality, there never happens any diſpute about taking place, becauſe every one knows exactly what is due to his own and others quality ; and it was a great ſurprize to every body to ſee, about ſix or ſeven years ago, a prince of the blood and a Colao engaged in ſuch a ſort of diſpute. The occaſion of it was this ; the laws ordain, that, when a Colao is about to ſpeak to a prince of the blood, he muſt bend the knee, but cuſtom has laid as ſtrong an obligation on the prince, to take him up immediately.

The prince thought, that an obliging cuſtom, tho' conſtantly practiſed by the royal family on ſeveral occaſions, ought not to prejudice his right by law. He did therefore give audience to a Colao on his knees, and never made any motion to him to riſe. The miniſter of ſtate, in a great confuſion to ſee himſelf kept ſo long in ſo humble a poſture, complained of it to the emperor, who aſſembled his council forthwith. They looked into the ceremonial to obſerve what they could find that would contribute to the deciding this novel caſe, but when they could find nothing therein ſerviceable to that end they were more perplexed than ever.

Finally, the council, who were againſt innovations, judged that the practice ought to be continued as before ; and, not freeing the Colaos from their obligation of ſpeaking to the princes of the blood on their knees, they thought it requiſite alſo that the princes ſhould uſe that civility towards them as not to keep them in that poſture long. *You can't*, ſaid they to the Colao, *honour the princes too much, and you do not do well to omit any occaſion where you can ſhew the reſpect you bear them. Princes*, added the emperor to him who had occaſion'd this diſpute, *are by their own rank ſet high enough above the reſt of mankind, as not to need proudly to ſeek to debaſe them lower. They can want nothing to make them honourable, but temper and modeſty.*

modeſty. When you are denied the reſpect due to you, all the world knows you have not what you ought to have; but, when you inſiſt upon every little mark of reſpect, it will make the world begin to inquire whether you deſerve it. Thus both of them were reprimanded, and that no new laws might be made they let cuſtom be their rule.

Every thing, that belongs to the princes or Mandarines, is punctually ſtated; their penſions, their houſes, the number of their ſervants, the ſhape and bigneſs of their ſedans, are the badges of honour by which they are diſtinguiſhed; ſo that, when they come into publick, their quality is preſently known, and the reſpect which is due to them with as little trouble paid. When the Chineſe governed the empire, even private men wore their marks of diſtinction; and there was no learned man but his degree and rank might be known by the faſhion or colour of his garb.

The towns have their determinate figure; they ought all to be ſquare as far as the ground they are built upon will ſuffer it; in ſuch ſort that the gates may be ſo built as to anſwer the four principal quarters of the world, that is, the North, South, Eaſt, and Weſt. The houſes have thorough lights, and are eſteemed ill built if the doors do not lie exactly parallel to one of the ſides of the town.

Towns of the ſeveral orders have different bigneſs, the chief towns are nine or twelve miles round, thoſe of the firſt rank are but ſix; thoſe of the ſecond or third orders are leſs in proportion. This rule nevertheleſs is not ſo univerſal as to admit of no exception. The ſtreets are ſtrait, generally laid out by the line, large, well paved, yet very inconvenient, becauſe every perſon of any account goes up and down them either on horſeback or in a chair. The houſes are low, of an equal height; the jealouſy of the husbands would not ſuffer that their neighbours houſes ſhould be higher than their own, leſt thereby their windows ſhould overlook their court-yards and gardens.

The whole town is divided into four parts, and thoſe again into ſeveral ſmaller diviſions, each of which contains ten houſes, over every one of which ſubdiviſions an officer preſides, who takes notice of every thing which paſſes in his little ward, tells the Mandarine what contentions happen, what extraordinary things, what ſtrangers come thither or go thence. The neighbourhood is obliged to give mutual aſſiſtance, and, in caſe of an alarm, to lend one another an helping hand, for, if any theft or robbery be committed in the night, the neighbourhood muſt contribute towards repairing the loſs. Laſtly, in every family the father is reſponſible for the diſorders and irregularities committed either by his children or ſervants.

The gates of the city are well looked after, and even in time of peace are ſhut up at the approach of night. In the day time there are guards to examine all who come in, if he be a ſtranger; if he comes from another province, or from a neighbouring town, they know him by his tone, by his mien, or his habit, which in every place are ſomewhat different. When they obſerve any thing extraordinary or ſuſpicious, they take the perſon up, or inform the Mandarine of it; ſo that European miſſionaries, whoſe aſpect is infinitely different from that of the Chineſe, are known as ſoon as ſeen, and thoſe who have not the emperor's approbation find it very difficult to make a long journey.

In certain places, as at *Pekin*, as ſoon as night comes on they tie chains croſs the ſtreets, the guards go the patrole up and down the chief ſtreets, and guards and centinels are placed here and there. The horſe go the rounds upon the fortifications; and woe be to him who is found then from home.

Meetings, maſquerades, balls, and ſuch like nightworks are good, ſay the Chineſe, for none but thieves and the mob. Orderly people ought at that time either to ſit up providing for their family, or elſe take their reſt, that they may be refreſhed, and better able the next day to manage the buſineſs of the family.

Gaming is forbidden both to the commonalty and gentry; which nevertheleſs hinders not the Chineſe from playing, ſometimes even ſo long as till they have loſt all their eſtate, their houſes, their children and their wives, which they ſometimes hazard upon a card; for there is no degree of extravagance to which the deſire of lucre and riches will not carry a Chineſe. But beſides that it is a diſorder which the Tartars, ſince they became maſters of China, have introduced amongſt them, they take great heed to conceal their gaming, and by conſequence the law which forbids it always flouriſhes, and is able to ſuppreſs great diſorders.

What I have ſaid concerning wives, that their husbands may ſell them, or loſe them at play, puts me in mind to give ſome account of the rules which their civil conſtitution, rather than their religion, hath ordained concerning marriages; thoſe who have a mind to marry do not, as among us, follow their own fancies in their choice of a wife: they never ſee the woman they are about to have, but take her parents word in the caſe, or elſe they have their information from ſeveral old women, who are as it were inſpectors, but who are nevertheleſs in fee with the woman's friends to ſet her out more than ſhe deſerves; ſo that it is very ſeldom that they make a true deſcription, or give a juſt character of her whom they go to view.

The woman's parents give money generally to theſe emiſſaries to oblige them to give a favourable character; for it is for the parents advantage that their daughter ſhould be reputed handſome, witty, and genteel; becauſe the Chineſe buy their wives, and, as in other merchandizes, they give more or leſs according to the good or bad properties of them.

When the parties are agreed about the price the contract is made, and the money paid down; then preparation is made on both ſides for the nuptial ſolemnities: when the day of marriage is come, they carry the bride in a ſumptuous chair, before which go hautboys, drums, and fifes, and after it follow her parents, and other particular friends of her family. All the portion which ſhe brings is her marriage garments, ſome cloaths, and houſhold goods, which her father preſents her with. The bridegroom ſtands at his door richly attired, waiting for her; he himſelf opens the ſedan, which was cloſely ſhut, and, having conducted her into a chamber, delivers her to ſeveral women invited thither for that purpoſe, who ſpend there the day together in feaſting and ſporting, while the husband in another room entertains his friends and acquaintance.

This being the firſt time that the bride and bridegroom ſee each other, and both, or one, very often not liking their bargain, is very often a day of rejoicing for their gueſts, but of ſorrow for themſelves. The women muſt ſubmit tho' they don't like, becauſe their parents have ſold them; but the husbands ſometimes are not ſo complaiſant, for there have been ſome, who, when they firſt opened the ſedan to receive the bride, repulſed by her ſhape and aſpect, have ſhut the chair again, and ſent her and her parents and friends back again, willing rather to loſe their money than enter upon ſo bad a purchaſe.

When the Tartars in the late war took Nankim, there happened a paſſage which made the Chineſe merry notwithſtanding all their misfortunes. Among all the diſorders which the victors committed in that province, they endeavoured to ſeize upon all the women they could to make money of them. When they took the chief city of that province, they carried all the women thither, and ſhut them up higgly piggly together in the magazines with other goods. But becauſe there were ſome of all ages, and degrees of beauty, they reſolved to put them into ſacks and carry them to market, and ſo ſell them to any one at a venture ugly or handſome. There was the ſame price ſet upon every one, and for ſixteen or eighteen ſhillings take which ſack you will without opening it. After this manner the ſoldiers, who were ever inſolent in proſperity, abuſed their victory, and approved themſelves more barbarous in the moſt polite and civil city in the world, than they had been in the deſarts of Tartary.

At the day of ſale there came buyers enough; ſome came to recover, if haply they could, their wives or children, who were among thoſe women, others were led thither thro' hopes that good fortune and a lucky chance would put a fortune into their hands. In ſhort, the novelty of the thing brought a great concourſe from the adjacent places. An ordinary fellow, who had but twelve ſhillings in the world, gave it, and choſe a ſack as did the reſt, and carried it off; when he was got out of the crowd, whether thro' curioſity, or a deſire to relieve the perſon in the ſack, who complained, he could not forbear opening it. In it he found an old woman, whom age, grief, and ill treatment had made deformed to the higheſt degree; he was ſo confoundedly mad at it, that, to gratify his paſſion and rage, he was going to throw the old woman and ſack both together into the river, that the gratification of his paſſion might be ſome comfort to him for the loſs of his money.

Then the good old gentlewoman ſaid to him, Son, your lot is not ſo bad as you imagine; be of good chear, you have made your fortune: take care only of my life, I will make yours happier than ever it has been yet. Theſe words ſomewhat pacified him: wherefore he carried her into a houſe hard by, where ſhe told him her quality and her eſtate. She belonged to a Mandarine of note in the neighbourhood, to whom ſhe wrote immediately. He ſent her an equipage agreeable to her quality, and ſhe carried her deliverer along with her, and afterwards was ſo good a friend to him, that he never had reaſon to complain that he had loſt the two crowns which he laid out in purchaſing her.

But to return to the Chineſe marriages; I muſt farther tell you, that a husband may not divorce his wife, except for adultery, and a few other occaſions, which ſeldom or never fall out; in thoſe caſes they ſell them to whoſoever will buy them, and buy another. Perſons of quality never do thus, but common people do frequently. If a man has the boldneſs to ſell his wife without juſt reaſon, both the buyer and ſeller are ſeverely puniſhed, yet the huſband is not obliged to take her again.

Altho' a man be allowed but one wife, he may have as many concubines as he will; all the children have an equal claim to the eſtate, becauſe they are reckoned as the wife's children tho' they be ſome of the concubines; they all call the wife mother, who is indeed ſole miſtreſs of the houſe; the concubines ſerve and honour her, and have no manner of authority or power but what they derive from her.

The Chineſe think it a ſtrange thing that the Europeans are not thus allowed the uſe of women, yet they confeſs it as a commendable ſign of moderation in them. But when we obſerved to them the troubles, quarrels, contentions, and jealouſies which many women muſt needs raiſe in a family, they ſaid nothing is without ſome inconvenience and diſorder, but that perhaps there are more croſſes in having but one, than in having many women. The beſt, way they own, is to have none at all.

Altho' the Chineſe are extremely jealous to that degree that they ſuffer not their wives to ſpeak in private even to their own brethren, much leſs give them liberty to enjoy all that freedom and publick diverſion which in Europe is eſteemed only gallantry and curioſity; nevertheleſs there are husbands ſo very complaiſant to their wives as to let them freely commit adultery, which permiſſion ſome women make the condition of their marriage: thoſe who according to ſuch agreement follow theſe courſes (as there is a certain ſort of people who do) have no manner of power to hinder debauchees from frequenting their houſes, and from making ill uſe of the eaſineſs or unruly paſſions of ſuch women. But ſuch families as theſe are abhorred by the Chineſe, who think ſo ill of them, that their children, tho' never ſo deſerving or intelligent, can never obtain any degree, or be employed in any honourable office.

Of all their civil inſtitutions there is no one which coſts the Chineſe ſo much trouble as does the ordering of their time, and their holy-days. There are in the emperor's ſervice above an hundred perſons, on purpoſe to regulate the kalendar, which they make anew every year, and with a great deal of ceremony ſend it up and down to the viceroys of each province. They regulate the number of months, which is ſometimes twelve, ſometimes thirteen, which are lunar months, and ought to agree with the ſun's courſe. In theſe almanacks the equinoxes, ſolſtices, and the ſun's entry into each ſign are ſet down: the eclipſes of the ſun or moon are there, and the time when viſible at Pekin or any of the principal cities. The planets courſes, their places in the ecliptick, their oppoſitions, conjunctions, and propinquity to any ſtars are deſcribed, and indeed every thing elſe is well calculated, which aſtronomy has, that is curious or excellent. They mix with this divers points of judicial aſtrology, which ignorance or ſuperſtition have invented, concerning happy or unhappy days, times proper for marriage, building, or undertaking journies. Theſe prejudices generally guide the people; but the emperor and all men of ſenſe are wiſer than to mind ſuch trifles.

Altho' there be no publick clocks as in Europe, the day is nevertheleſs divided into four and twenty parts, which have all their particular names, and begin from midnight. They tell me that anciently they divided their day into twelve parts, each of which were ſubdivided into eight, which made the natural day conſiſt of fourſcore and ſixteen, which were exactly diſtinguiſhed in their calculations. But their ſun-dials (and they have very ancient ones) were divided into four general diviſions, each of which contained four and twenty little ſubdiviſions, which added to the four great diviſions divided the whole circle into an hundred parts.

This ſort of dialing ſeems very irregular, nor can I ſee for what uſe it was intended. Since they have received the new kalendar from the miſſionaries, they have regulated their dials by hours, and reckon their time almoſt as we do, only we muſt take notice that inſtead of two hours they reckon but one; ſo that their natural day conſiſts of but twelve hours, the names of which, diverſly combined with ten other terms which they have invented, make a revolution of ſixty, which ſerves them inſtead of a cycle to mark their different years. I dare not trouble you, my lord, with particular enumerations, which would be too tedious, and are in foregoing relations ſufficiently explained.

As for the people, they are not very nice herein; they content themſelves with knowing the time of the ſun's riſing and ſetting, and noon. In the night they make uſe of bells and drums, which are very often ſounded, and ſerve to diſtinguiſh the night into five watches.

The current coin is very odd. They have round copper pieces with a hole in the middle, that they may be ſtrung; they are full of characters; the metal is neither pure nor well hammered; and, altho' they are thick, one may break them with one's fingers if one ſtrive; ten of theſe make a penny, ten of which are the tenth part of the Chineſe crown, called by the Portugueſe, in the Indies, Taël, and by themſelves Leam, which crown amounts to ſix ſhillings two-pence half-penny, and $\frac{22}{73}$ of a farthing.

This crown piece is not coined with any ſtamp or image on it, as our money in Europe is; the Chineſe ſilver money is not made in any determinate regular form, they take for money any irregular pieces or bits of ſilver by weight, which if they do not believe to be good ſilver they cut aſunder. This they practiſe to prevent falſe and counterfeit money, and they are ſo expert in gueſſing at the goodneſs and value of any piece of ſilver by looking on it only, that they are ſeldom miſtaken, eſpecially if it be melted after the manner practiſed there.

They know the goodneſs of it three ways; by the colour, by ſeveral little holes which are made in it by the melting pot, and by divers ſmall circles which the air makes on the ſurface of the metal when it cools after melting. If the colour be white, the holes ſmall and deep, if the circles be many, and thoſe cloſe, and very fine, eſpecially toward the center of the piece, then the ſilver is pure: but the more it differs from theſe three qualities ſo much the more alloy it has.

To explain myſelf better, I muſt tell you, they divide their ſilver, with reſpect to its purity, into a hundred ſorts, as we do gold into four and twenty, called carats; the ſilver which is current in trade is all the ſorts between the eightieth and the hundredth ſort or degree of purity. If it be of a baſer alloy they will not take it, but puniſh thoſe who offer it. They take our money as ſilver of the fourſcore and fifteenth ſort, tho' thoſe, who underſtand ſilver well, judge it to be but of the fourſcore and third ſort at moſt; ſo that in an hundred ounces of our ſilver there are ſeven of alloy, or, which is all one, an hundred ounces of it is worth but ninety three of fine ſilver.

As for gold, it never paſſes in China for money no more than jewels do; they buy it as they do other goods or merchandiſe, and the Europeans make a good market of it, becauſe in China a pound of gold bears but the ſame proportion to a pound of ſilver as one does to ten, whereas among us it is as one to fifteen, ſo that the merchant gets by it generally a third part.

Since almoſt every thing is there ſold by weight, amongſt ſeveral ſort of ſcales, they make uſe of a ſmall portable balance, kept in a ſmall varniſhed caſe, which is very light and uſeful; they are ſomething like the Roman balance, conſiſting of a ſmall diſh, an arm, and a weight that ſlides up and down that arm, which is made of ivory or ebony, in bigneſs, length, and ſhape like a pen; it is divided into three ſmall parts, on three different ſurfaces; it hangs by ſilken threads, at one of the ends, in three different points, that it may the better weigh weights of every ſort. They weigh very nicely and exactly; for in thoſe, whoſe arm is of any conſiderable length, the thouſandth part of a crown will ſenſibly turn the ſcale.

There are two ſorts of thoſe ſcales, one more agreeable to the ancient balances, which are uſed in courts of juſtice; the beam of this is ſo divided as exactly to agree with the weight of the French money, ſince it hath been increaſed by a ſixth part in weight, ſo that every diviſion of the beam weighs the weight of a ſou or penny; ſo that ſeventy-two Chineſe ſous or pennies weigh exactly a French crown, or an ounce Engliſh. But the common balance, which is moſt uſed in China, is ſomewhat different from this, for a French crown will weigh ſeventy-three diviſions of this beam; this I thought myſelf obliged to take notice of, that we may the better underſtand what the relations hitherto have ſo much differed about.

The Chineſe divide their pound weight, as we do, into ſixteen ounces, each ounce into ten parts called Tçien; each of theſe into ten penny weights, and each of theſe again into ten grains. There are a great many other diviſions, which decreaſe in the ſame proportion that one has to ten, which diviſions our language has no names for. Altho' theſe ſmaller diviſions come almoſt to nothing when ſingle in the ſcale, yet in great traffick they reckon them, where the multiplication of them ariſes to a conſiderable ſum. In ſhort, if we ſuppoſe that our crown ſhould weigh three drachms, or one and twenty penny weights and eight grains, then the Chineſe pound will contain nineteen ounces, three drachms, two penny weights, thirteen grains $\frac{62}{73}$. And on the contrary, our pound will contain thirteen ounces Chineſe, one Tçien, and four penny weights, underſtanding theſe two laſt weights as they are explained above.

As to the common meaſures in uſe in this empire, they have by divers perſons been repreſented in different manners; becauſe, of thoſe who have wrote upon this ſubject, ſome have had recourſe to the meaſures of one province, others to thoſe of another. I have examined all of them carefully, and do think that father Verbieſt's meaſures, which they uſe in the mathematical court, are the exacteſt. The Chineſe foot is very little different from ours; not but that ours is ſomewhat longer, almoſt $\frac{1}{100}$; but this diffe-

rence

rence is nothing with the Chineſe, who do not ſtand ſo nicely and ſtrictly to their meaſure as we do, which the people have to meaſure with, and not to contend and quarrel by.

The civil government of the Chineſe does not only preſide over the towns, but extends alſo over the highways, which they make handſome and eaſily paſſable. The paſſages for their water are in ſeveral places fenced in with ſtone walls for the convenience of travelling, over which there are a great number of bridges, which unite the towns and the fields together. Canals are alſo cut for the water to paſs thro' all the towns of the ſouthern provinces, to make their ditches more ſecure, and the towns more pleaſant. In low and marſhy grounds, they throw up prodigious long banks, which keep their roads in thoſe parts good; to perform which they ſtick at no coſt, cutting a paſſage even thro' mountains when they ſtand in their way.

The road from Sigan to Hamchou is one of the ſtrangeſt pieces of work in the world. They ſay, for I myſelf have never yet ſeen it, that upon the ſide of ſome mountains which are perpendicular, and have no ſhelving, they have fixed large beams into them, upon which beams they have made a ſort of balcony without rails, which reaches thro' ſeveral mountains in that faſhion; thoſe, who are not uſed to this ſort of galleries, travel over them in a great deal of pain, afraid of ſome ill accident or other: but the people of the place are very hazardous; they have mules uſed to this ſort of roads, which travel with as little fear or concern over theſe ſteep and hideous precipices, as they could do in the beſt or plaineſt heath. I have in other places expoſed myſelf very much by following too raſhly my guides.

One can't imagine what care they take to make the common roads convenient for paſſage. They are fourſcore feet broad or very near it; the ſoil of them is light and ſoon dry when it has left off raining. In ſome provinces there are on the right and left hand cauſeways for the foot paſſengers, which are on both ſides ſupported by long rows of trees, and oftentimes terraſſed with a wall of eight or ten feet high on each ſide, to keep paſſengers out of the fields. Nevertheleſs theſe walls have breaks, where roads croſs one the other, and they all terminate at ſome great town.

There are ſeveral wooden machines made like triumphal arches ſet up in the roads about a mile and a half diſtant from each other, about thirty feet high, which have three doors, over which is wrote, upon a large frize, in characters ſo large as may be read at almoſt half a quarter of a mile diſtance, how far it is from the town you left, and how far to the town you are going to; ſo that you have no need of guides here, for you may by theſe directions ſee what place the road leads to, and from whence you came, how far you are already gone, and how far you have yet to go.

The great care, which they have taken to lay out all theſe diſtances by the line, makes the account which theſe inſcriptions give to be pretty ſure; yet they are not equal, becauſe the miles in ſome provinces are longer than in others. It has happened likewiſe that ſome of theſe arches, being ruined and conſumed by decay and time, have not been ſet up exactly in the ſame place; but generally ſpeaking they ſerve for a good meaſure of the highways, beſides that in ſeveral places they are no ſmall ornament.

On one ſide of theſe ways, about the ſame diſtance, are fix'd little towers made of earth caſt up, on which they ſet up the emperor's ſtandard; near it is a lodge for ſoldiers or country militia. Theſe are made uſe of in time of rebellion, or indeed at any other time, to carry any expreſs if occaſion be, or to hand letters from one to another; but eſpecially they take care to ſtop highwaymen and robbers.

Every man who goes by armed is obliged to give an account whence he came, whither he is going, and upon what buſineſs, and muſt ſhew his paſs. Beſides theſe guards, in caſe of an alarm, give a helping hand to travellers, and ſtop all thoſe who are ſuſpected or accuſed of robbery. Among the mighty number of inhabitants which are in China, a great part of which ſcarce know how to get a ſubſiſtence, a body would imagine that abundance muſt needs turn thieves; yet one may travel there with as great ſafety as here. I have travelled there ſix thouſand miles, up and down, thro' almoſt all the provinces, and was never but once in danger of being robbed. Four ſtrange horſemen followed me for a whole day together, but the roads were ſo full of travellers up and down, that they could never get the coaſt clear for a quarter of an hour together, and ſo fell ſhort of their aim.

Their poſts are as well regulated as ours in Europe are, at the emperor's ſole charge, who for that end maintains a great number of horſe. The couriers go from Pekin for the capital cities; the viceroys of which, as ſoon as they have received the diſpatches from court, ſend them forthwith by other couriers to the towns of the firſt rank; from whence they are by theſe governors conveyed to thoſe of the ſecond rank under their juriſdiction; and from thence they are tranſmitted to the towns of the third rank. It is true theſe poſts were not eſtabliſhed for the conveyance of private letters, yet the poſtmaſters, for a little money, undertake to carry letters for private men, as they always do for the miſſionaries, who find it as ſure a way as that uſed in Europe, and much leſs chargeable.

As it is a matter of importance that the emperor's orders be quickly tranſmitted, ſo it is a great part of the Mandarines care to ſee that the roads be good; and the emperor, to keep them the more ſtrictly to this, ſpreads a report, that he intends ſhortly to viſit this or that province. The governors of thoſe provinces ſpare no charge or pains to repair thoſe roads, becauſe it not only concerns their fortunes, but ſometimes their life, if this care be omitted.

As I once paſſed juſt by a village of the third rank, in the province of Xenſi, they told me that the governor had juſt hanged himſelf thro' deſpair, leſt he ſhould not have time enough to repair a road thro' which the emperor was to paſs to the capital town. The emperor nevertheleſs never went the journey, ſo that the Mandarine might have ſaved his life by a little patience. But yet, all the care, which the Chineſe can uſe, will never prevent a mighty inconvenience which happens to thoſe who travel in their roads.

The ſoil of China is mighty light, and very much beaten by the vaſt multitudes who travel, ſome on foot, ſome on camels, others in litters, and again others in chariots, ſo that the roads are perfectly ground into very fine powder; when this is raiſed by travellers, and carried about by the winds, it is enough to blind all paſſengers if they have have not maſks or veils on them. Thro' theſe clouds you muſt continually make your way, and ſuck them in inſtead of air, during whole journies together. When the weather is hot, and the wind in one's face, ſcarce any one, except a native, can withſtand it: I have ſometimes been forced to deſiſt from my journey and come back again.

But of all their wholſome inſtitutions there is nothing which contributes ſo much to the keeping up peace and order, as does their method of levying the emperor's revenue. They are not troubled in China with ſuch ſwarms of officers and commiſſioners

ners as we are. All the eſtates there are meaſured, and all the families regiſtered ; and, whatſoever the emperor is to have by exciſe on goods, or tax upon perſons, is publickly known ; every body brings what is due from him, to the Mandarines or governors of the towns of the third rank, for there is no particular receiver appointed. Thoſe, who neglect to bring in their dues, do not loſe by confiſcation, which would be to puniſh the innocent of that family with the guilty ; but the perſons ſo offending ſuffer impriſonment, and undergo the baſtinado till they have made ſatisfaction.

Theſe Mandarines of the lower rank give in an account of what they receive, to a general officer of the province, who accounts with the court of Pekin, which looks after the publick exchequer. A great part of the revenue is diſburſed up and down the provinces in penſions, ſalaries, ſoldiers pay, and publick buildings : what is over is carried to Pekin, to maintain the emperor's court, and other expences in that town, where the emperor keeps in pay above an hundred and ſixty thouſand regular troops, to whom, as well as to the Mandarines, is given out every day meat, fiſh, rice, peaſe, and ſtraw, according to every one's rank, beſides their conſtant pay, which they regularly receive.

That, which comes from the ſouthern provinces, is alone ſufficient to anſwer this expence, this they bring by water in the emperor's veſſels ; yet, they are ſo jealous leſt the revenue ſhould at any time fall ſhort of the diſburſements, that in Pekin there are magazines of rice before-hand, ſufficient for three years ; which will keep a great while if it be well fanned and mixed, and altho' it looks not ſo well, nor taſtes ſo pleaſantly as new rice, yet it is much more wholſome and nouriſhing.

This numerous army about the emperor, well looked after, duly paid, and exactly diſciplined, one would think, ſhould awe all Aſia; yet their idleneſs, and the ſmall uſe they ever have occaſion to make of their weapons, does contribute to weaken them as much as their natural effeminacy. The weſtern Tartars do not value their numbers a ſtraw, and frequently ſay in deriſion of them, that the neighing of a Tartary horſe is enough to rout all the Chineſe cavalry.

Yet, they take all poſſible care to have good ſoldiers, for they take no officers into the guards, till they have made trial of their ſtoutneſs, ſkill, and dexterity in military affairs. They are regularly examined, ſo that as learned men have their doctors to examine them, ſo theſe have alſo their profeſſors.

Theſe officers do regularly exerciſe their companies, they form them into ſquadrons, march them, teach them to divide their files, to march thro' narrow paſſages, ſhew them to give the onſet, to rally at the ſound of the cornet or trumpet; beſides, they are very dexterous in managing their bow, or handling their ſcymitar: yet ſoon broke, and by the leaſt thing in the world put into diſorder. The occaſion of this I apprehend to be, becauſe in the education of their youth they never inſtil into them principles of honour and bravery, as we do as ſoon as ever they are big enough to know what weapons are. The Chineſe are always talking to their children of gravity, policy, law, and government; they always ſet books and letters in their view, but never a ſword into their hands: ſo that having ſpent their youthful days behind the counter, or at the bar, they know no other courage but that of defending obſtinately an ill cauſe, and are liſted into the ſoldiery on no other conſideration, but that they hope there will be no occaſion for fighting. The Chineſe policy hinders hereby a great many domeſtick feuds and diſturbances; but, at the ſame time it does expoſe its ſubjects hereby to the inſults of foreigners, which is ten times worſe.

Thus, my lord, I have ſet before you a general ſcheme of the government of China, of which people have ſpoke ſuch wonders, and which is indeed admirable for its antiquity, for the wiſdom of its maxims, for the plainneſs and uniformity of its laws, for that exemplary virtue which it has produced in a long ſucceſſion of emperors, for that regularity and order which it has kept the people in, in deſpite of civil or foreign wars; which, notwithſtanding, like the reſt of the things of this world, is ſubject to a great many inconveniences; to rebellions, which have depopulated whole provinces, to the injuſtice of ſome princes who have abuſed their power, to the avarice of Mandarines, who have often oppreſſed the people, to invaſions from abroad, and treachery from home, to ſuch a number of changes, as would have unhinged the very government and laws, if a more politick people, than are the Tartars, were near enough the empire to introduce their own method of government.

It would, my lord, be a piece of flattery to myſelf, to imagine, that I have by this tedious account added any thing to that immenſe ſtore of knowledge which you have drawn from the beſt ſprings of antiquity, from the converſation of the moſt ingenious of the moderns, and from the management of the moſt momentous affairs, or (which is a greater fountain of underſtanding) from your own natural wit and ingenuity, which has made you (if I may uſe the expreſſion) a native of all countries, and a philoſopher of all ages.

But I am ſure you will be glad to ſee, that the trueſt maxims of good policy are not altogether ſtrangers in the Eaſt; and that, if China do not form ſo great miniſters as you are, it forms great enough to underſtand your worth, and to follow your ſteps, and improve themſelves from the copy you ſet them, if they could but know you. I am, in the moſt profound manner,

My Lord,

Your Eminence's moſt obedient

and moſt humble Servant,

L. J.

LETTER X.

To my Lord Cardinal de Bouïllon.

Concerning the Ancient and Modern Religion of China.

My Lord,

I Do not at all wonder that your highneſs is pleaſed to hear relations of China. It belongs only to great princes to be thoroughly acquainted with all that concerns the ſeveral kingdoms of the world, and to make a true judgment of the power and grandeur of empires. God, who has ſent ſuch men into the world to govern it, has given them a more than ordinary ability and knowledge to perform it; ſo that, my lord, if I take upon me the liberty to acquaint your lordſhip with what repeated voyages for the ſpace of ſeveral years have given me to know in this affair, it is not ſo much to inſtruct you in it, as to beg your highneſs's judgment of it.

I may ſay this ſtill with more truth when I have the honour to write to you of religion. This is more particularly your concern; and I may ſay, that if your quality, your ingenuity, and your incomparable learning have made you above all men our judge; your eminent dignity in the church obliges us, in ſacred concerns, to hear and conſult your highneſs as our oracle.

'Tis on this proſpect, my lord, that I now preſent to you theſe memoirs with ſome reflections, which the cuſtoms of the Chineſe and the reading of their books have ſuggeſted to me concerning their religion, being of this mind, that, after ſo many different opinions and long diſputes which have for a whole age divided the moſt learned miſſionaries, there is no better way of coming to deciſion, than to obtain your highneſs's judgment therein.

Religion has always had a great ſhare in eſtabliſhing the greateſt kingdoms, which could never ſupport themſelves, were not the people's minds and hearts tied together by the outward worſhip of ſome deity; for people are naturally ſuperſtitious, and rather follow the guidance of faith than reaſon. It was therefore for this reaſon that the ancient lawgivers always made uſe of the knowledge of the true God, or of the falſe maxims of idolatry, to bring the barbarous nations under the yoke of their government.

China, happier in its foundation than any other nation under the ſun, drew in the chief of the holy maxims of their ancient religion from the fountain head. The children of Noah, who were ſcattered all over the eaſtern parts of Aſia, and, in all probability, founded this empire, being themſelves in the time of the deluge witneſſes of the omnipotence of their Creator, tranſmitted the knowledge of him, and inſtilled the fear of him into all their deſcendants; the foot-ſteps, which we find in their hiſtories, will not let us doubt the truth of this.

Fohi, the firſt emperor of China, carefully bred up ſeven ſorts of creatures, which he uſed to ſacrifice to the ſupreme Spirit of heaven and earth. For this reaſon ſome called him Paohi, that is, Oblation; a name, which the greateſt ſaints of the old and new teſtament would have been proud to have, and which was reſerved for him alone, who made himſelf an oblation both for ſaints and ſinners.

Hoamti, the third emperor, built a temple to the ſovereign Lord of heaven; and altho' Judea had the honour of conſecrating to him one more rich and magnificent, hallowed even by the preſence of our Creator, and the prayers of our Redeemer, it is no ſmall glory to China, to have ſacrificed to their Creator in the moſt ancient temple of the world.

Tçouen hio, the fifth emperor, thought afterwards, that one place was too narrow to contain the ſervices paid to the Lord of the univerſe. He therefore inſtituted prieſts or eccleſiaſtical Mandarines in ſeveral provinces, to preſide over the ſacrifices. He gave them ſtrict command to obſerve that divine ſervice was performed with all humility and reſpect, and that all the religious ceremonies were ſtrictly obſerved.

Tiho, his ſucceſſor, took as much care of religion as he had done. Hiſtories relate, that the empreſs his wife, being barren, begged children of God during the ſacrifice with ſuch fervour and earneſtneſs, that ſhe conceived in a few days, and ſome time after was brought to bed of a ſon, who was famous for that forty emperors ſucceſſively reigned of his family.

Yao and Chan, the two princes who ſucceeded him, are ſo famous for their piety and for the wiſdom of their governments, that it is very likely that religion was ſtill more flouriſhing during their reigns.

It is alſo very probable, that the three ſucceeding families did preſerve the knowledge of God, for about 2000 years, during the reigns of 80 emperors; ſince the learnedeſt among the Chineſe maintain, that, before the ſuperſtitions introduced with the god To into China, there were no idols or ſtatues ſeen. This is certain, that, during all that ſpace of time, the obſervation of the emperor Yao's maxims was recommended to the princes, of which the moſt eſſential and principal was concerning the worſhip of the ſovereign Lord of the world; and altho' ſome emperors have been ſo wicked as to reject them ſo far, as even to threaten Heaven itſelf, and fooliſhly challenge it to fight, they have been nevertheleſs looked upon as monſters; and other emperors about that time have diſcovered by their actions a good ſenſe of religion.

Vou vam, the firſt of the third line, did himſelf, according to ancient cuſtom, offer ſacrifices, and his brother who bore him a paſſionate love, and thought his life ſtill neceſſary for the good of the kingdom, ſeeing him one day in danger of dying, proſtrated himſelf before the Divine Majeſty to beg his recovery. *It is you, O Lord,* ſaid he, *who have given him to his people; he is our father, he is our maſter. If we fall into any diſorder, who can ſet us to rights again ſo well as he? And if we follow exactly what thou haſt inſpired him to teach us, why puniſheſt thou us by taking him? As for me, O Lord,* continued the good prince, *I can be but little ſerviceable to this world; if you deſire the death of a prince, I offer up my life with all my heart for a ſacrifice, if you will be pleaſed to ſpare my maſter, my king, and my brother.* The hiſtory ſays, his prayer was heard, for he died as ſoon as he had put up his petition. An example which demonſtrates, that not only the tenour of religion was preſerved among thoſe people, but farther, that they followed the dictates of the pureſt charity, which is the very quinteſſence and perfection of religion.

But Tchim-vam, his ſon and ſucceſſor, gave ſuch bright marks of his piety, towards the end of his life, that it leaves us no room to doubt of the truth of what I have advanced. You ſhall hear what the ancient Chineſe books ſay of him: This prince, ſay they, who had always regulated his behaviour according to the ordinances of the ſupreme Governor of heaven, fell dangerouſly ill in the fiftieth year of his age, and thirty-ſeventh of his reign. When he knew the danger he was in, he called together the principal officers of his court, with a deſign to nominate his ſucceſſor, and that he might omit nothing which was uſually performed on ſuch occaſions, he aroſe from his throne where he had ordered his ſervants to ſet him; he made them waſh his hands and face, cloath him with his imperial habits, and put his crown on his head; and then, leaning on a table of precious ſtone, he ſpake to the company in this manner.

'My ſickneſs is every day worſe and worſe, for 'thus has Heaven ordain'd; I fear death will ſeize 'upon me, and therefore thought myſelf obliged to 'acquaint you with my laſt will. You know how 'great the reputation of my father and grandfather 'was, and how bright the examples of virtue, which 'they ſet the empire, did appear. I was very unworthy to fill the place in which theſe great men 'ſat; notwithſtanding, I did ſucceed them, I do 'nevertheleſs acknowledge my ignorance and unfitneſs.

'It is for this reaſon perhaps, that Heaven has 'ſhorten'd the days of my reign. I ought in this, 'as well as in all other things, to acquieſce; for 'you have all ſeen that I have hitherto received its 'orders with an humble fear, and a profound reſpect. 'I have endeavour'd to follow them, without ever

‘ deviating from them the leaſt in the world; I have ‘ alſo all my life time had in my heart my anceſtors ‘ inſtructions touching my duty to Heaven, and to ‘ my people. On theſe two heads I cannot accuſe ‘ myſelf of any fault, and, if my life has had any ‘ reputation, it is all owing to that teachableneſs, ‘ which has brought down upon me the bleſſings of ‘ the ſovereign Maſter of the world.

‘ It is on your account that I ſpeak this (addreſſing ‘ himſelf to his eldeſt ſon) it is on your account, ‘ oh, my ſon; be you the inheritor of your anceſtors ‘ virtue, rather than of my power and crown. I ‘ make you a king, ’tis all that you can have of me; ‘ be a wiſe, virtuous, and unblameable prince, this ‘ I command you, and the whole empire expects ‘ from you.”

Under the reigns of this prince and his ſon * it was, that peace, honeſty, and juſtice reigned in China, ſo that they oftentimes ſent their priſoners to dig or plough the grounds, or get in the corn, without thinking that the fear of puniſhment would make them run away. After harveſt they came again to receive that puniſhment of their faults which the Mandarines had appointed.

Laſtly, if we examine well the hiſtory of China, we ſhall ſtill find, that for three hundred years after, that is to ſay, down to the times of the emperor Yeouvam, who reigned eight hundred years before Chriſt, idolatry had not corrupted this people; ſo that they have preſerved the knowledge of the true God for near two thouſand years, and did honour their Maker in ſuch a manner as may ſerve both for an example and inſtruction to chriſtians themſelves.

They had all along a ſtrict care to breed up beaſts for ſacrifices, and to maintain prieſts to offer them up; beſides, that the internal worſhip of the mind was preſcribed, they did oblige themſelves to a nice obſervation

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* *Cam-vam.*

obſervation of even the ſmalleſt ceremonies which might in any ways be ſerviceable to the people's edification; the empreſſes did themſelves breed up ſilk-worms, and with their own hands worked coverings for the altars, and habits for the prieſts. The emperors have oftentimes tilled the ground, which produced the corn or wine deſtined for ſacred uſes. Again, the prieſts never dared to offer ſacrifices before the people, unleſs prepared for it by an abſtinence of three or ſeven days from conjugal enjoyments. They have had their ſolemn faſt-days, and days of prayer in publick, eſpecially when the empire laboured under any publick calamity, either by barrenneſs, by floods, by earthquakes, or wars from abroad.

With this outward worſhip it is, that the emperors prepare themſelves for war; for taking upon themſelves the government, or viſiting the provinces; and that Heaven may favour their enterpriſes with ſucceſs, they inquire of their ſubjects of their own faults, that they may amend them, believing that all publick calamities are occaſioned thro' their ill government. We meet with a ſignal inſtance of this in hiſtory, which I cannot forbear reciting.

An univerſal barrenneſs having continued over all the provinces for ſeven years together (which time ſeems not far diſtant from the ſeven years of barrenneſs of which the ſcripture ſpeaks, and perhaps this thing a little looked into may ſerve to amend or confirm our chronology *) the people were reduced to extreme want; and when prayers, faſts, and other acts of humiliation were uſed without ſucceſs, the emperor not knowing any means proper to be uſed to gain relief from this publick misfortune, after having offered to God ſeveral ſacrifices to appeaſe his in-

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* This emperor died 1753 years before the birth of Jeſus Chriſt, and the ſeven years of ſcarcity, according to the ſcripture, happen'd 1743 years before the ſame birth.

dignation, he reſolved at laſt to offer up himſelf for a ſacrifice.

For this purpoſe he called together the chief perſons of his kingdom, in the preſence of them all diſmantled himſelf of his royal apparel, and cloathed himſelf meanly. In this habit, with his head and face bare, in the ſame faſhion that a criminal appears before a judge, he marched attended by his whole court, to a mountain a good diſtance from the town. When, proſtrating himſelf before the divine Majeſty, to whom he paid his adorations nine times, he ſpake in theſe words: *O Lord, you know the miſeries to which we are reduced. It is my ſins which have brought them upon my people, I come hither to own and acknowledge it in the preſence of heaven and earth. That I may the better amend my faults, give me leave, O Lord, of all the world, to ask what action of mine has more particularly given you offence. Is it the ſplendor of my palace? I will take care to retrench what is ſuperfluous: perhaps the profuſeneſs of my table, or the delicacy and voluptuouſneſs of it have brought this ſcarcity: hereafter nothing ſhall be ſeen there but thriftineſs and temperance. The laws permit to me the uſe of concubines, but perhaps you diſlike that I have too many. I am ready to leſſen the number. And, if all this be not ſufficient to appeaſe your juſt indignation, and you muſt have an oblation; behold one, O Lord, I am heartily willing to die, if thou wilt ſpare this good people: let rain come from heaven on their fields to relieve their neceſſities, and thunder on my head to ſatisfy your juſtice.*

The prince's piety touch'd the clouds, for the air was preſently overcaſt, and an univerſal rain immediately fell, which did in due ſeaſon bring forth a fruitful harveſt. When idolaters ſeem ſcandalized at the death of Jeſus Chriſt, we uſe the example of this prince to juſtify our faith. You not only approve of this action, ſay we to them, in which one of your emperors diſrob'd himſelf of all that was magnificent, and offer'd himſelf a ſacrifice for his ſubjects; but you admire it, and recommend it to poſterity as a fit pattern for all the princes of the world: how then can you diſlike that exceſſive love and kindneſs, which made Jeſus Chriſt offer himſelf an oblation and ſacrifice for all men; and deſpoil himſelf of the brightneſs of his Majeſty, to inveſt us one day with his glory and divinity?

Theſe footſteps of the true religion, which we find in China for ſo many ages together, carry us naturally to make a reflection, which will juſtify the providence of the Almighty in the government of the world. People are ſometimes amaz'd, that China and the Indies have been overſhadow'd by the clouds and darkneſs of idolatry, almoſt ever ſince the birth of our Saviour, while Greece, a great part of Africk, and almoſt all Europe, have enjoy'd the clear light of faith; but they never conſider, that China, for two thouſand years, had the knowledge of the true God, and have practis'd the moſt pure morality, while Europe and almoſt all the world wallow'd in error and corruption.

God, in the diſtribution of his gifts, is not an unjuſt reſpecter of perſons; yet he has laid out his times, to let his grace ſhine forth in due ſeaſon, which, like the ſun, riſes and ſets in different parts of the world, according as people make a good or bad uſe of it.

I do not know whether I may make bold to add, that as the ſun, which by its conſtant motion hides itſelf to ſome, to ſhew itſelf to others, has notwithſtanding, at the year's end, diſtributed to every country its equal portion of light and warmth; ſo God by the ſecret and hidden courſe of his grace and ſpirit, which have been communicated to the world, hath equally divided them to all people in the world, tho' in different manners, and at different times. However it be, that God has made his wiſe diſtribution of grace, I am ſure of all nations China has leaſt reaſon to complain, ſince no one has receiv'd a larger portion than ſhe.

The knowledge of the true God, which laſted many ages after the reign of Cam-vam, and in all probability, a long while after the time of Confucius, was not always ſupported in the ſame purity. Their minds were poſſeſſed by idolatry, and their manners became ſo corrupt, that the true faith, being but the occaſion of greater ill, was by little and little taken away from them by the juſt judgment of God. Among all the ſuperſtitions which follow'd hereupon, there were two ſorts which were principally eſtabliſhed, and do, between them at this preſent, comprehend almoſt all the empire.

Li Laokun gave riſe to the firſt of theſe. He was a philoſopher who lived before Confucius ; his birth was prodigious, if you believe what his followers ſay of it: for his mother carried him more than fourſcore years in her flanks, from whence, a little before her death, he ſprang out of her right ſide, which opened itſelf. This monſter, to the ſorrow of his country, ſurvived his mother, and by his pernicious doctrine in a ſhort time grew famous : nevertheleſs he wrote ſeveral uſeful books ; of virtue, of the good of avoiding honour, of the contempt of riches, of that incomparable retiredneſs of mind, which ſeparates us from the world the better to know ourſelves. He often repeated the following ſentence, which he ſaid was the foundation of true wiſdom. *Eternal reaſon produced one, one produced two, two produced three, and three produced all things :* which ſeems to ſhew as if he had ſome knowledge of the Trinity.

But he taught that God was corporeal, and that he governed other deities as a king governs his ſubjects. He applied himſelf mightily to chymiſtry, of which ſome pretend he was the inventer. He beat his brains likewiſe about the philoſopher's ſtone, and did at length fancy, that, by a certain ſort of drink, one might be immortal. To obtain which his followlowers practiſe magick, which diabolical art, in a ſhort time, was the only thing ſtudied by the gentry. Every body ſtudied it in hopes to avoid death ; and the women thro' natural curioſity, as well as deſire to prolong their life, applied themſelves to it, wherein they exerciſe all ſorts of extravagancies, and give themſelves up to all ſorts of impieties.

Thoſe, who have made this their profeſſed buſineſs, are called Tien ſe, that is Heavenly Doctors; they have houſes given them to live together in ſociety, they erect in divers parts temples to Laokun their maſter ; king and people honour him with divine worſhip ; and altho' they have examples enough to have undeceived them from theſe errors, yet they vehemently purſue immortality, by his precepts who could never gain it himſelf.

Time, which ſtrengthens and confirms what is ill, did at length gain theſe falſe doctors ſuch a reputation, as made them almoſt innumerable. The covenants which they make with the devil, the lots which they caſt, their magical wonders, whether true or only ſeeming, make them dreaded and admired of the common herd ; and, whenceſoever it comes to paſs, there is no body who does not give ſome credit to their maxims, or does not hope to avoid death by their means.

One of theſe doctors * got himſelf ſo great a reputation, that the emperor gave him the name Cham-ti ; which is the name by which they call God himſelf ; and ſignifies Supreme Emperor. This piece of impiety gave the killing blow to the ancient religion ; for till then the Chineſe, as much idolaters as they were, did always make a diſtinction between the Cham-ti, and the other gods. But, by a juſt judgment from God, the family of that prince was ex-

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* *Cham-y*

tinct, and the empire, which had hitherto obſerved its own rules of government, was the firſt time forced to ſubmit to thoſe of the weſtern Tartars. This a famous Colao †, who printed a book, could not but acknowledge: *In this time,* ſays he, *the emperor* Hoei-tcoum *did, againſt all manner of reaſon, give the attributes of the ſupreme God to a man. This moſt powerful and adorable God, above all the ſpirits in heaven, was ſenſible of the wrong done him; for he puniſhed ſeverely the wickedneſs of this prince, and utterly rooted out his family.*

The ſecond ſect, which is prevalent in China, and is more dangerous and more univerſally ſpread than the former, adore an idol which they call Fo or Foe, as the only god of the world. This idol was brought from the Indies two and thirty years after the death of Jeſus Chriſt. This poiſon began at court, but ſpread its infection thro' all the provinces, and corrupted every town: ſo that this great body of men, already ſpoiled by magick and impiety, was immediately infected with idolatry, and became a monſtrous receptacle for all ſorts of errors. Fables, ſuperſtitions, tranſmigration of ſouls, idolatry and atheiſm divided them, and got ſo ſtrong a maſtery over them, that, even at this preſent, there is not ſo great an impediment to the progreſs of chriſtianity, as is this ridiculous and impious doctrine.

No body can well tell where this idol Fo, of whom I ſpeak, was born; (I call him an idol and not a man, becauſe ſome think it was an apparition from hell) thoſe, who with more likelihood ſay he was a man, make him born above a thouſand years before Jeſus Chriſt, in a kingdom of the Indies, near the line, perhaps a little above Bengala. They ſay he was a king's ſon. He was at firſt call'd Che-Kia; but at thirty years of age he took the name of Fo. His mother, who brought him into the world thro' her right ſide, died in childbirth: ſhe had a fancy in her dream, that ſhe ſwallow'd an elephant, and for this reaſon it is, that the Indian kings pay ſuch honour to white elephants: for the loſs of which, or gaining ſome others, they often make bitter wars.

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† *Kieou-Kioum-Chan.*

When this monſter was firſt born he had ſtrength enough to ſtand alone, and he made ſeven ſteps, and pointed with one hand to heaven, and the other to the earth. He did alſo ſpeak, but in ſuch a manner as ſhew'd what ſpirit he was poſſeſs'd withal. *In heaven, or on earth*, ſays he, *I am the only perſon who deſerve to be honoured.* At ſeventeen he married, and had a ſon, which he forſook, as he did all the reſt of the world, to retire into a ſolitude with three or four Indian philoſophers, whom he took along with him to teach. But at thirty he was on a ſudden poſſeſs'd, and, as it were, fill'd with the divinity, who gave him an univerſal knowledge of all things. From that time he became a god, and began, by a vaſt number of ſeeming miracles, to gain the people's admiration. The number of his diſciples is very great, and it is by their means, that all the Indies have been poiſoned with his pernicious doctrine. Thoſe of Siam call them Talapoins, the Tartars call them Lamas or Lama-ſem, the Japoners Bonzes, and the Chineſe Hocham.

But this chimerical god found at laſt, that he was a man as well others. He died at 79 years of age; and, to give the finiſhing ſtroke to his impiety, he endeavoured to perſuade his followers to atheiſm at his death, as he had perſuaded them to idolatry in his life-time. Then he declared to his followers, that all which he had hitherto told them was enigmatical; and that they would be miſtaken, if they thought there was any other firſt principle of things beſides nothing; *It was*, ſaid he, *from this nothing, that all things ſprang; and it is into this nothing, that all things muſt* *return. This is the abyſs where all our hopes muſt end.*

Since this impoſtor confeſſed, that he had abuſed the world in his life, it is but reaſonable, that he ſhould not be believed at his death. Yet, as impiety has always more champions than virtue, there was among the Bonzes a particular ſect of atheiſts, formed from the laſt words of their maſter. The reſt, who found it troubleſome to part with their former prejudices, kept cloſe to their firſt errors. A third ſort endeavoured to reconcile theſe parties together, by compiling a body of doctrine, in which there is a twofold law, an interior and an exterior. One ought to prepare the mind for the reception of the other. It is, ſay they, the mould which ſupports the materials till the arch be made, and then is taken away as uſeleſs.

Thus the devil, making uſe of mens folly and malice for their deſtruction, endeavours to eraſe out of the minds of ſome thoſe excellent ideas of God, which are ſo deeply ingraved there, and to imprint in the minds of others the worſhip of falſe gods under the ſhapes of a multitude of different creatures, for they did not ſtop at the worſhip of this idol. The ape, the elephant, the dragon, have been worſhipped in ſeveral places, under pretence perhaps, that the god Fo had ſucceſſively been tranſmigrated into theſe creatures. China, the moſt ſuperſtitious of all nations, increaſed the number of her idols, and one may now ſee all ſorts of them in the temples, which ſerve to abuſe the folly of this people.

It is true, they ſometimes do not pay to theſe gods all that reſpect which ſeems due to their quality. For it often happens, that, if the people after worſhipping them a great while do not obtain what they deſire, they turn them off, and look upon them as impotent gods, others uſe them in the moſt reproachful manner: ſome load them with hard names, others with hard blows. How now, *Dog of a ſpirit*, ſay they to them ſometimes, we give you a lodging in a magnificent temple, we gild you handſomely, feed you well, and often offer incenſe to you, and after all this care, which we take of you, you are ſo ungrateful as to refuſe what we ask of you.

Then they tie him with cords, pluck him down, and drag him along the ſtreets thro' all the mud and dunghills, to puniſh him for the expence of perfume which they have offered up to him for nothing. If in the mean time it happens, that they obtain what they did deſire, then they take the idol, and with a great deal of ceremony carry him back and place him in his nich again, after they have waſhed and cleanſed him: they fall down to him, and make excuſes for what they have done. In truth, ſay they, we were a little too haſty, as well as you was ſomewhat too long in your grant; why ſhould you bring this beating on yourſelf? Were it not better to have granted our petition of your own free will, rather than be forced to do it? But what is done can't be now undone, let us not therefore think of it any more; if you will forget what is paſſed we will gild you over again.

A few years ago there happened a paſſage at Nankim, which does very well diſcover what an opinion the Chineſe have of their gods. A man, whoſe only daughter was very ill, tried all the phyſicians, but without effect; he thought it therefore his beſt way to betake himſelf to the aſſiſtance of his gods. Prayers, offerings, alms, ſacrifices, and all other means, were uſed to obtain relief. The Bonzes, who were greaſed in the fiſt, promiſed that an idol, whoſe power they mightily boaſted, ſhould grant her recovery. For all this the woman died, the father out of meaſure grieved, reſolved to revenge himſelf, and to bring a formal accuſation againſt the idol.

He put in his complaint therefore to the judge of the place, in which after he had lively ſhewed forth the deceitfulneſs of this unjuſt god, he ſaid, that he deſerved an exemplary puniſhment for having broke his word. If this ſpirit, ſaid he, could cure my daughter, it is palpable cheating to take my money, and yet let her die. If he could not do it, what does he ſignify? And how came he by his quality of godſhip? Do we worſhip him, and the whole province offer him ſacrifice for nothing at all? So that he concluded it to be either from the malice and weakneſs of the idol, that the cure was not performed; wherefore his temple he judged ought to be pulled down, his prieſts ſhamefully diſmiſſed, and the idol puniſhed in his own private perſon.

The buſineſs ſeemed of conſequence to the judge, wherefore he ſent it to the governor, who, deſiring to have nothing to do with thoſe of the other world, deſired the viceroy to examine into it. After he had heard the Bonzes, who were extremely concerned at it, he took their part, and adviſed him not to perſiſt in the cauſe any longer: for, ſaid he to him, you are not wiſe, to concern yourſelf with this ſort of ſpirits. They are naturally ill tempered, and I am afraid will play ſome ill trick. Believe me, you had better come to an agreement. The Bonzes aſſure me, that the idol ſhall do what is reaſonable on his part, provided you on your part do not carry things too high.

But the man, who was almoſt mad for the death of his daughter, did conſtantly proteſt, that he would ſooner periſh than relinquiſh his juſt rights. The ſentence is given for me, ſaid he, the idol fancied, that he might commit any ſort of injuſtice without puniſhment, becauſe he thought no body would be bold enough to take him to task; but he is not ſo ſafe as he thinks, and a little time will ſhew which of us is the moſt wicked, and the moſt a devil of the two.

The viceroy could not now go back, and was fain therefore to grant a trial; he ſent the caſe to the ſovereign council at Pekin, who remitted the trial to him again, he therefore ſubpœna'd the parties. The devil, who had but too many friends among all ſorts of men, had alſo his ſhare among the lawyers and proctors; thoſe of them, to whom the Bonzes gave largely, found their cauſe good, and ſpoke with ſo much concern and vehemence, that the idol itſelf could not have pleaded better its own cauſe. Yet they had to deal with a ſubtle adverſary, who had been beforehand with them, and had cleared the judge's underſtanding by a large bribe, being thoroughly perſuaded, that the devil muſt be very cunning indeed, to withſtand ſo clear an argument as this laſt was to the judges.

In ſhort, after a great many hearings, the man carried his point. The idol was condemned to a perpetual baniſhment, as uſeleſs to the kingdom, and his temple was to be plucked down; and the Bonzes who repreſented him were ſeverely chaſtiſed; they might notwithſtanding apply themſelves to the ſervice of other ſpirits, to make themſelves amends for the damage they had received for loving this.

Can any one who has not loſt his ſenſes adore gods of this character, weak, fearful, and whom one may affront ſafely? But alas! We may flatter ourſelves that we are never ſo wiſe, yet how much is our wiſdom diſtant from reaſon, when it is diſtant from the true faith.

Inſtead of coming hereby to a knowledge of the weakneſs of their gods, the people grow more and more blind every day. The Bonzes are above all obliged to keep up their credit and reputation, becauſe of the advantage they make thereby. To bring this about the better, they make uſe of the following maxims of morality, which they take great care to propagate.

We muſt not think, ſay they, that good and evil are as confuſed in the other world as they are in this; there are there rewards for the good, and puniſhments for the bad; which has occaſioned different places to be ſet apart for the ſouls of men, according to every one's merit. The god Fo was the ſaviour of the world, he was born to teach the way of ſalvation, and to make expiation for all our ſins.

He has left us ten commandments. The firſt forbids the killing of any living creature of what ſort ſoever; the ſecond commands not to take another man's goods; the third not to give up one's ſelf to impurity; the fourth not to lye; and the fifth to drink no wine.

Beſides theſe, they recommend to the people's practice ſeveral works of mercy. Entertain and nouriſh up, ſay they, the Bonzes; build them monaſteries and temples, that their prayers and voluntary penances may obtain for you exemption from that puniſhment which your ſins have deſerved. Burn paper gilt and waſhed with ſilver, habits made of ſtuff and ſilk. All theſe in the other world ſhall be turned into real gold and ſilver, and into true and ſubſtantial garments, which ſhall be given to your fathers faithfully, who will make uſe of them as they have occaſion. If you do not regard theſe commands, you ſhall be after your death cruelly tormented, and expoſed to ſeveral Metempſycoſes or tranſmigrations; that is to ſay, you ſhall be born in the ſhape of rats, horſes, mules, and all other creatures. This laſt point makes a great impreſſion upon their minds.

I remember, that, being in the province of Xanſi, I was ſent for to chriſten a ſick perſon. It was an old man of threeſcore and ten, who lived upon a ſmall penſion, which the emperor had given him. When I came into his chamber, O my good father, ſays he, how much am I obliged to you, who are going to deliver me from a great deal of torment. Baptiſm, anſwered I, does not only deliver from the torment of hell, but intitles us to the enjoyment of a place in paradiſe: O how happy will it be for you to go to heaven, eternally to live in the preſence of God! I do not, ſaid the ſick man, underſtand what you mean, nor perhaps have I explained my meaning clearly to you; you know, father, I have lived a long time upon the emperor's bounty. The Bonzes, who are perfectly well acquainted with all the tranſactions of the other world, aſſure me, that I ſhall be obliged after my death, by way of recompenſe for my penſion, to ſerve him, and that my ſoul will infallibly go into one of his poſt horſes, to carry diſpatches from court thro' all the province. They have therefore been adviſing me to mind my duty in that new ſtate; not to ſtumble, nor kick, nor bite, nor otherwiſe hurt any one; run well, and eat little, and be patient, ſay they, and you may move the gods to compaſſion, who often, of a good beaſt, make at length a perſon of quality, or a conſiderable Mandarine. I proteſt, father, the very thoughts of it makes me quake, it never comes into my mind, but I tremble; yet I dream of it every night, and ſometimes methinks in my ſleep I am already in the harneſs, ready to run at the firſt jerk of the poſtilion. Then I wake in a great ſweat, and half mad, ſcarcely knowing, whether I am a man or a horſe. But, alas! What will be my ſorrow when this will be no more a dream but a reality.

This therefore, father, is the courſe I took. They tell me, that thoſe of your religion are not ſubject to thoſe changes: that men are always men, and are, in the other world, of the ſame kind as they are here. I beg of you therefore to receive me among you. I know your religion is hard to obſerve; yet, if it had ten times more difficulties, I am ready to embrace it; and, whatſoever trouble it put me to, I had rather be a chriſtian than be turned into a beaſt. This diſcourſe,

courſe, and the condition the man was in, wrought me into compaſſion; and afterwards conſidering with myſelf, that God makes uſe of ignorance and folly to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, I took an occaſion from thence to undeceive him of his miſtakes, and to lead him into the way of ſalvation. I inſtructed him a great while, at laſt he believed: and I had the comfort to ſee him die, not only with a clearer and better underſtanding of things, but farther with all the marks of a good chriſtian.

In proceſs of time, the ſuperſtitions of the people grew ſo numberleſs, that I do not believe any nation under the ſun is ſo full of whimſies as China. The Mandarines are obliged to condemn all theſe ſects as hereticks, as indeed they do in their books; but yet ſpringing themſelves moſtly from idolatrous families, and having been inſtructed by the Bonzes, they in their practice follow the example of the common people.

Two of theſe Bonzes, ſeeing one day in a rich farmer's yard two or three large ducks, fell on their faces before the door, and ſigh'd and wept grievouſly. The good woman, ſeeing them out of her chamber window, came down to ſee what was the occaſion of their tears. We know, ſaid they, that the ſouls of our fathers are tranſmigrated into thoſe creatures, and the fear we are in, leſt you ſhould kill them, will without doubt go near to kill us: It is true, ſaid the woman, we did intend to ſell them, but, ſince they are your fathers, I promiſe you we will keep them.

This anſwer was not for the Bonzes purpoſe. But, continued they, perhaps your huſband will not be ſo charitable, and then, if any accident ſhould happen to them, you may be ſure it will kill us. At laſt, after a long diſcourſe, the good woman was ſo far moved with their pretended grief, that ſhe gave them the ducks to look after for ſome time to comfort them. They took them with a great deal of reſpect, proſtrating themſelves twenty times to them; but that very evening they made an entertainment of them for ſome of their company, and fattened themſelves with them.

A prince of the blood loſt a young man for whom he had a particular love; a few years after he ſpoke of it with a great deal of warmth and concern to the Bonzes, who ſaid to him: My lord, do not trouble yourſelf any more, your loſs may be repair'd; he whom you grieve for is in Tartary, and his ſoul is paſſed into a young man's body; but there muſt be a great deal of money to find where he is, and you muſt give good preſents to the prieſts of that country. This news pleaſed the prince mightily, ſo that he gave them what they deſired; and a few months after they got a boy any where, and gave him to the prince inſtead of the boy who was dead. Thus it is, that the whole country, from the peaſant to the prince, are bubbled by theſe miniſters of iniquity.

If they can't thus trick people out of their money, they try to get it out of them by doing acts of penance publickly, which the people eſteem them mightily for, and ſhew them a great deal of pity and compaſſion. I have ſeen them dragging after them a long chain of iron as thick as one's arm, about thirty feet long, faſtened to the neck or legs. Thus it is, ſay they, at every door as they paſs, that we expiate your faults, ſure this deſerves ſome ſmall alms. Others in publick places knock their pates with all their force with large bricks, till they are almoſt cover'd with blood. They have ſeveral other penitential actions; but what I was moſt ſurpriſed at was this.

One day I met in the middle of a town a young Bonze of a good mien, a genteel and modeſt look, ſuch as might eaſily move any one's compaſſion and charity. He ſtood upright in a ſort of a ſedan very cloſe ſhut, the inſide of which was like an harrow full of nails very thick, with their points ſticking out towards the man in the chair, ſo that he could not bend either one way or t'other without wounding himſelf.

ſelf. Two fellows were hir'd to carry him from houſe to houſe, where he begg'd the people to have compaſſion on him.

He told them he was ſhut up in that chair for the good of their ſouls, and was reſolv'd never to go out from thence till they had bought all the nails (of which there were above two thouſand) at the rate of ſix-pence a-piece, of which nails, the very ſmalleſt he had would derive incomparable bleſſings on them and their families. If you buy any of them, you will do an action of heroick virtue, and your alms are not beſtow'd on the Bonzes, to whom you may take other opportunities of beſtowing your charity, but to the god Fo, in whoſe honour we are going to build a temple.

In the mean while I happen'd to paſs thro' the ſtreet; the Bonze, ſeeing me, came and told me the ſame tale. I told him, that he was very unhappy to torment himſelf thus in this world for no good, and did counſel him therefore to come out of his priſon, to go to the temple of the true God to be inſtructed in heavenly truths, and ſubmit to penance leſs ſevere, but more wholſome. He was ſo far from being in a paſſion with me, that he anſwer'd me calmly and courteouſly, that he was much obliged to me for my good advice, and would be more obliged to me ſtill, if I would buy a dozen of his nails, which would certainly make me have a good journey.

Here hold your hand, ſays he, turning on one ſide, take theſe; upon the faith of a Bonze they are the very beſt in all my ſedan, for they prick me the moſt, yet you ſhall have them at the ſame rate at which I ſell the others. He ſpoke thoſe words in ſuch a manner, as would have made me on any other occaſion have laugh'd; but at that time his blindneſs raiſed my compaſſion, and I was ſtrangely concerned to ſee that bondman of the devil ſuffer more to work out his own deſtruction, than a chriſtian need do to gain his ſalvation.

Yet all the Bonzes are not penitents: while ſome abuſe the credulous by their hypocritical pretences, others get money out of them by magical arts, ſecret thefts, horrible murders, and a thouſand deteſtable abominations, which modeſty won't let me mention here. People, who are only outwardly religious, ſpare nothing to gratify their paſſions; and if they can but eſcape the juſtice of men, which in this place ſpares none who are caught wronging their neighbour, they care not what they do in the eyes of that God whom they will ſcarcely own.

Although the generality of the people are prejudiced in favour of them, yet the wiſer ſort are always upon their guard againſt theſe wretches; and the magiſtrates always take great notice of what they do in their monaſteries. It happened a few years ago, that a governor of a town, paſſing with his train n the highway, ſaw a great company of people got ogether, and had the curioſity to ſend to know what was the occaſion of their meeting there.

The Bonzes were ſolemnizing an extraordinary feſival; they had ſet a machine upon a ſtage, at the op of which a young man put out his head over a ttle rail, which went all round the machine. The ail hid his arms and all his body; one could ſee othing at liberty but his eyes, which he rolled bout as if he was diſtracted. Below this machine n old Bonze appeared upon the ſtage, who told the eople that the young man which they ſaw was go- g to ſacrifice himſelf, according to cuſtom, in this anner. There ran by the road ſide a deep river, to which he would preſently throw himſelf headng. He can't die, added the Bonze, if he would, cauſe at the bottom of the river he will be received y charitable ſpirits, who will give him as good a elcome as he can deſire; and indeed it is the eateſt happineſs that can poſſibly befal him; an undred perſons have deſired to ſacrifice themſelves inſtead of him, but him we choſe before the reſt, becauſe of his zeal and other virtues.

When the Mandarine had heard this ſpeech, he ſaid, that the young man indeed had a great deal of courage, but he wonder'd much that he did not himſelf tell the people of this his reſolution; let him come down a little, ſaid he, that we may talk with him. The Bonze, who was confounded at this order, did all he could to hinder it, and did proteſt, that the whole ſacrifice would be ineffectual if he ſpake a word, nay, if he did but open his mouth, and for his part he could not anſwer for the miſchief ſuch a thing would bring upon the province. For the miſchief you talk of, replied the Mandarine, I'll be reſponſible; and then he commanded the young man to come down; he gave no other anſwer to theſe commands but hideous and frightful looks, and various diſtortions of his eyes, which almoſt ſtarted out of his head.

You may from hence, ſaid the Bonze, judge what violence you offer him in commanding him down. He is already almoſt diſtracted, and if you continue your command you will make him die with grief. This did not make the Mandarine change his reſolution, but he order'd ſome of his retinue to go up and bring him down. They found him tied and bound down on every ſide, with a gag in his mouth; and as ſoon as they had untied him, and taken away the gag from the poor fellow's mouth, he cried out, as loud as he could bawl; Ah! my lord, revenge me againſt thoſe aſſaſſins, who were going to drown me. I am a batchelor of arts, and was going to the court at Pekin, to aſſiſt at the examinations there; yeſterday a company of Bonzes ſeiz'd upon me violently, and this morning very early they bound me to this machine, taking from me all power of crying out or complaining, and intending to drown me this evening, being reſolv'd to accompliſh their accurs'd ceremonies at the expence of my life.

When he began to ſpeak the Bonzes were marching off, but the officers of juſtice, who always attend the governors, ſtopp'd ſeveral of them. The chief of them, who had pretended juſt before that the young man could not be drown'd, was himſelf immediately thrown into the river and drown'd; the others were carried to priſon, and did after receive that puniſhment which they deſerv'd.

Since the Tartars have been emperors of China, the Lamas, another ſort of Bonzes, have been eſtabliſh'd there. Their habit is different from thoſe of China both in ſhape and colour, but their religion is the ſame with the Chineſe, and they worſhip the god Fo; they differ from the Chineſe only in a few particular ſuperſtitious practices. Theſe Lamas are chaplains to the Tartar nobility who live at Pekin; but in Tartary they themſelves are the gods which the people worſhip.

There it is that the god Fo has his moſt famous ſeat, where he appears under a ſenſible figure, and, as they ſay, never dies. He is kept in a temple, and an infinite number of theſe Lamas ſerve him with an ineffable veneration, which they ſtrive as much as they can to imprint upon the minds of all others whatſoever. When he dies, for he is but a man placed there, they put in his room a Lamas of the ſame ſtature, and, as near as they can, of the ſame features, that the people may be the better deceiv'd by it. Thus the people of this country, and eſpecially all ſtrangers, are eternally bubbl'd by theſe impoſtors.

Among the different religions exercis'd in China, I do not think it worth while to mention to your highneſs a few Mahometans, who have liv'd for theſe ſix hundred years, in ſeveral provinces, and are never diſturb'd, becauſe they never diſturb any one elſe upon the ſcore of religion, being content to enjoy it themſelves, or to propagate it there among their kindred by marriages. However, it may be of uſe to tell you of a third ſect, which is the religion, or philoſophy, or policy of ſome of the learned; for one cannot tell by what name to call this doctrine, which is ſo obſcure, that the very profeſſors of it ſcarce underſtand what they teach; they call it in their language Iukiao, and is a ſect of learned men.

That you may underſtand what I am going to tell you, you muſt know that civil wars, magick, and idolatry having put the empire into confuſion for many ages, the love of learning was quite caſhier'd, and there were found few doctors, who could by their writings awaken the minds of men out of that lethargy into which ignorance and corruption of manners had lull'd them; only, about 1070 *, ſome creditable expounders were found; and, in 1200, one doctor did diſtinguiſh himſelf from all others, for his extraordinary underſtanding; by his example they began by degrees to take ſome pleaſure in reading ancient books, which they had before thrown aſide.

Laſtly, in the year 1400, the emperor, being willing to ſtir up in his ſubjects a love of learning, made choice of fourſcore and two of the moſt ingenious doctors, whom he commanded to compile a ſyſtem agreeable to the ſentiments of the ancient writers, which might ſerve as a direction for the learned hereafter. The Mandarines, who had the commiſſion, ſet themſelves diligently to work; but being prejudiced with thoſe opinions which idolatry had diffuſed all over China, inſtead of following the true ſenſe of the ancients, they tried, by falſe gloſſes and interpretations, to diſtort the words and ſayings of the ancients to their prejudicate opinions.

They ſpake of God as nothing different from nature itſelf; that is, from that power, energy, or natural virtue which did produce, and put in order, all the

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* *After our Saviour.*

the parts of the world, and which does ſtill keep them that in order. He is, ſay they, a moſt pure and moſt perfect principle; he is the ſource of all things, and the eſſence of all beings, and that which conſtitutes the formal difference of every thing. They made uſe of thoſe magnificent expreſſions of the ancients, that they might ſeem to keep to their doctrine; but indeed they raiſed new opinions, becauſe they underſtand hereby I can't tell what ſort of inſenſible ſoul of the world, which they imagine ſpread thro' matter, upon which it produces the ſeveral mutations we ſee. This is not that ſupreme Emperor of heaven, all juſt and all powerful, the chief of all creatures: in their works nothing is found but a better ſort of atheiſm, and a licentious freedom from the worſhip of God.

But, whether it was becauſe they were unwilling to expreſs themſelves plainly, or did accidentally make uſe of expreſſions of a larger ſignification than their meaning, yet they talk of Heaven as did the ancients, and aſcribe to nature almoſt all thoſe perfections which we attribute to God. They tolerate willingly the Mahometans, becauſe like them they adore the Maſter and King of Heaven. They perſecute all other ſects with great violence, which at court they took up a reſolution utterly to aboliſh throughout the whole empire.

Yet many reaſons perſuaded them from putting this reſolution in practice, the chief of which were theſe; even ſeveral among the learned were diſſenters from this new eſtabliſh'd doctrine, for they could not ſhake off the prejudices they had ſucked in: beſides all the people were wholly biaſs'd in favour of idols, ſo that their temples could never be pull'd down, but inſurrections and diſturbances muſt neceſſarily enſue. They were therefore contented to adjudge at Pekin all the other ſects hereticks (which they ſtill do every year) without ſetting themſelves effectually to ſtop the practice of them.

Theſe new books compoſed by their moſt learned men, and honour'd by the emperor's own approbation, were greedily received by every body. Some lik'd them, becauſe they deſtroy'd all ſorts of religion, and theſe make up the greateſt number of this ſect. Others approv'd of them, becauſe the religion which they contain'd was ſo very little, that it coſt them no pains nor trouble to practiſe it; and thus was the ſect of the learned form'd, of whom one may juſtly ſay, they honour God with their mouth and with their lips, for they often ſay, that we muſt adore and obey Heaven; but their hearts are diſtant from him, ſeeing they explain thoſe words in ſuch a ſort as deſtroys the very being of God, and ſtifles all ſenſe of religion.

Thus this people, ſo wiſe heretofore, ſo full of knowledge, and (if I may uſe the expreſſion) of the ſpirit of God, are now in theſe laſt days miſerably fallen into ſuperſtition, magick, paganiſm; and laſtly, into atheiſm itſelf, falling by degrees, ſtory by ſtory, till they come to the very bottom of the building; becoming thereby enemies to that reaſon which they had ſo conſtantly follow'd, and abominable to that very nature to which they now give ſuch high encomiums.

This is, my lord, an account of the preſent ſtate of China, with reſpect to the ſeveral religions there in uſe; for, as for the political honours which they pay to Confucius, they are not divine worſhip, and the palaces, which are call'd by his name, are not temples, but houſes for learned men to aſſemble in. I was unwilling to particularize their ceremonies, their opinions, and their morals; beſides that it would be tedious and endleſs, it is very difficult to give a certain account of them; becauſe the Bonzes do every day invent new whimſies, and, if they can but live at other other people's charge by abuſing them, they do not value whether they exactly follow the doctrine of their predeceſſors, which is in effect neither better nor freer from abſurdities than their own.

Nothing now remains, but that I give your eminence an account to which of theſe ſects, which divide the kingdom, the emperor is moſt inclinable. This prince, who is naturally wiſe and politick, has always kept in with the people. As he is upon a throne which the leaſt blaſt may ſhake, he endeavours, as much as he can, to ſtrengthen it by his people's love; he is ſo far from provoking them, that he makes himſelf very popular, yet not to ſuch a degree as his father did, leſt he ſhould bring upon himſelf the Mandarines hatred; yet much more than did the ancient emperors, to the end, that he may as much as poſſible ſweeten that yoke, which a new government has put on their ſhoulders.

He does therefore permit, or rather tolerate ſuperſtition; he pays a great deal of reſpect to ſeveral Bonzes of the firſt rank, who have behaved themſelves well in any of the provinces, or at court; nay, he does his own temper that violence as to let ſome of them live in his palace, thoſe whom the princeſs his mother had before brought and eſtabliſh'd there: but, tho' he thus favours their perſons, he is no ſlave to their opinions. He perfectly underſtands the folly of them, and does upon ſeveral occaſions laugh at thoſe things which they enjoin for principles of religion, as extravagancies and fables. He often ſends thoſe who ſpeak to him of them to the miſſionaries: *Hear*, ſays he, *thoſe fathers who reaſon ſo well, I am ſure they will not be of your mind.* One day he ſaid to father Verbieſt, his mathematician, *Why do not you ſpeak of God as we do? People would be leſs ſet againſt your religion. You call him Tien-tchu* *, *and we call him Cham-ti. Is it not the ſame thing? Will you leave the uſe of a good word becauſe*

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* Tien-tchu *ſignifies Lord of Heaven*: Cham-ti *Sovereign Emperor*.

people give falſe interpretations of it ? My lord, ſaid the father, *I know that your majeſty does follow the old doctrine of* China, *which ſeveral doctors have forſaken : and, if we ſhould uſe their words, they would fancy we believe as they believe ; but if your majeſty will by a proclamation publickly declare that the word Cham-ti ſignifies the ſame in effect, that the chriſtians mean by Tien-tchu, we are ready to make uſe of any one of them as ſoon as the other.* He liked the father's anſwer, but reaſons of ſtate hinder'd him from following his advice.

When the queen-mother was dead, thoſe, who had the care of the funeral committed to them, informed the prince that it was neceſſary, according to ancient cuſtom, to pull down part of the palace-wall, that the body might be carried thro' the breach; becauſe that the royal family would be expoſed to a great many misfortunes, if the body was carried thro' the ordinary paſſages. *You do not talk rationally*, ſaid the emperor to them, *your heads are full of whimſies. What folly is it to think my good or bad fortune depends upon the way by which my mother goes to her tomb ; It was my unhappineſs to loſe her, and to fear any misfortune, after ſo great a loſs, would be to diſhonour her after her death, by ſuperſtitious rites and ridiculous ceremonies.* Some time after ſeveral maids of honour to the empreſs came and fell at the emperor's feet, and begg'd with tears, that he would ſuffer them, who had ſerv'd the empreſs here, to follow her into the other world, where their ſervices might be needful to her. He ſaid to them : *I have taken care of that already, you need not therefore put yourſelves to farther trouble about it.* And, for fear leſt a cruel zeal might prompt them to lay violent hands on themſelves, he commanded their hair to be immediately cut off, and that they ſhould be confin'd. When they are ſhav'd, they fancy themſelves uſeleſs, and unfit to ſerve perſons of quality in the other world.

Theſe examples are enough to let us ſee, that the emperor is very far from giving himſelf up to all theſe popular extravagancies. He honours Confucius as the firſt and wiſeſt philoſopher in the world; in ſeveral things he follows cuſtom, when he judges it much for his intereſt; at certain times of the year he offers ſacrifices in the temples, according to ancient practice, yet he ſays, it is only in honour of the Cham-ti, and that he adores no other but the ſupreme Lord of the univerſe. Thus far the inſtructions of the miſſionaries have work'd upon him. He believes in one God, but ſtate reaſons, and the gratification of his paſſions, which are oppoſite to the ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt, have never ſuffered him to open his eyes to the truth of the goſpel. The rigidneſs and ſeverity of morals, which this requires, oftentimes ſtops the moſt reſolute; and we ſee every day perſons in the world, who have a greatneſs of ſoul enough to deſerve the name of Heroes, who do yet want courage when they ought to behave themſelves as thoſe who bear that of Chriſtians.

Neverthelеſs, this prince would not have any one think that he rejects our religion for want of courage. He told his mind to father Verbieſt one day in theſe words: *Your law is hard, yet, whatever difficulty was to be undergone, I ſhould not ſtick one minute to be of it, were I convinced of the truth of it. If I was once a chriſtian, I am pretty well ſatisfied that in three or four years the whole empire would be ſo too: For I am their maſter.* We might have ſome hopes from theſe ſentiments of the prince, if we were not on the other ſide perſuaded, that the love of pleaſure, and the fear of giving occaſion to ſome revolution in the empire, were not almoſt invincible hindrances to his converſion.

But who can find out the Almighty's deſigns? And who has hitherto penetrated into the myſteries of his eternal councils? Are not the hearts of the greateſt princes as well as of the meaneſt people in his keeping? it is from that Almighty hand that all our hopes are which has already confounded an infinite number of idols, and overthrown many of their temples; it has made viceroys, miniſters of ſtate, princes, and one empreſs ſubmit to the yoke of chriſtianity. The more the converſion of the emperor requires miracles, the more worthy it is of the great power and infinite goodneſs of God, who is called Great for no other reaſon than for the great and mighty things which he hath done.

Thus, my lord, if Europe continues to ſend into China fervent and devout miſſionaries, we may hope, that God will vouchſafe to make uſe of their zeal for the accompliſhment of this great work. I am, in the moſt profound manner,

My Lord,

Your Eminence's moſt obedient

and moſt humble Servant,

L. J.

LETTER XI.

To Monſieur Rouillié, *Counſellor of State in Ordinary.*

Of the Eſtabliſhment and Progreſs of the Chriſtian Religion in China,

Sir,

THE ardent zeal, which you have always ſhewed towards eſtabliſhing and promoting the chriſtian religion in China, makes me hope, that you will be pleaſed with the letter which I now take the boldneſs to write to you. You will not only read therein thoſe things which I have already had the honour to diſcourſe with you ſo often about, but alſo many other uſeful remarks, which I hope may be worthy your curioſity and attention.

It will, without doubt, bring you a great deal of comfort, by ſhewing you, that your care, your prayers, and your bounty have been ſeconded by Heaven; and that, in contributing ſo much as you have done to the converſion of ſo many ſouls, you will at the end of the world be accounted a father of many faithful.

But, in ſpite of all that I can ſay, you will not be made ſenſible of the great good you do there, for it is with the greateſt difficulty that you are brought to believe you do good: you will at leaſt ſee, that the fervent miſſionaries, who for more than an age have laboured in the large field of the goſpel, are not altogether unworthy their employment; and that the fruits, which they gather there, ſhould be an encouragement to all Europe, to perfect this great work, which by them has been ſo happily begun.

Among other things which the emperor objected againſt us, when diſcourſing of the chriſtian religion, this was none of the weakeſt. If the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, ſays he ſometimes, is neceſſary for ſalvation, and if God deſires the ſalvation of all men, why has he ſo long kept us in ignorance and error? It is now above ſixteen ages ſince your religion, the only way men have to obtain ſalvation, has been eſtabliſhed in the world; we knew nothing of it here. Is China ſo inconſiderable as not to deſerve to be thought of, while ſo many barbarous nations have been enlightened?

The miſſionaries have very ſolidly anſwered this objection, and that with ſo good a face of reaſon, as did give ample ſatisfaction to the emperor. I do not here tell you, ſir, their anſwer; you do yourſelf know all that could be poſſibly ſaid thereto. But perhaps it will not be tedious to you to let you know, that China has not been ſo much neglected as it thinks. We cannot inform ourſelves of all that has paſſed in this new world ſince the death of our Saviour; for the Chineſe hiſtories ſeldom ſpeak of any thing but what concerns political government: yet the Divine Providence would be ſufficiently juſtified in this point, if it had acted for the ſalvation of China no more than has come to our knowledge.

There is no doubt but St. Thomas preached the true faith in the Indies, and it is as certain, that the Indians had then great dealings with the Chineſe, to whom almoſt all India was tributary. It is therefore very probable, that this apoſtle, to whom the care of this new world was committed, did not neglect the beſt part of it, which was then as much diſtinguiſhed above the reſt of the eaſtern part, as Italy was above the weſtern in the moſt flouing condition of the Roman empire; ſo that perhaps he himſelf travelled there, or at leſt ſent ſome of his followers.

This conjecture which carries its own evidence with it, does ſtill receive confirmation, from what the Chineſe hiſtories relate concerning thoſe times. Their hiſtory ſays, that a man came into China and preached heavenly doctrine. He was not an ordinary man, adds the hiſtory, his life, his miracles, and his virtues made him admired by all the world. Furthermore, one may read in an ancient breviary of the church of Malabar, wrote in Chaldee, theſe words, which are in the office for St. Thomas's day. *It was by St. Thomas's means, that the Chineſe and Æthiopians were converted and came to the knowledge of the truth.* And in another place, *It was by St. Thomas*, that is to ſay, *by the preaching of St. Thomas, that the kingdom of heaven went into the empire of China.* And in an anthem we read theſe words which follow: *The Indies, China, Perſia, &c. offer up, in memory of St. Thomas, the worſhip due to thy holy name.* We cannot tell what converſions he wrought there, nor how long religion flouriſhed; but this is certain, that, if religion hath not been kept up in China till now, the Chineſe may thank themſelves, who, by a criminal neglect and voluntary ſtubbornneſs, did ſo eaſily part with the gift of God.

Neither is this the only time wherein our Lord hath viſited them. A great while after, that is, in the ſeventh century, a catholick patriarch of the Indies ſent miſſionaries thither, who preached the true religion with good ſucceſs. Altho' their hiſtory hath mentioned ſomething of this, yet it is done in ſo few words, and in ſo careleſs and obſcure a manner, that we ſhould never have had the happineſs of being thoroughly acquainted with this miſſion, were it not for an accident which happened a few years ago, which it pleaſed God to bring about, for the ſtronger eſtabliſhing the faith in this great empire.

In the year 1625, ſome maſons digging near Sigan, the capital of the province of Xenſi, found a long table of marble which had been heretofore erected as a monument in the manner they build them in China, and which time had buried in the ruins of ſome building, or had hid in the ground, ſo that no remains of it were viſible. This ſtone, which was ten feet long and ſix feet broad, was very nicely examined; the more for this reaſon, becauſe on the top of it there was a large croſs handſomely engraved, below which, was a long diſcourſe in Chineſe characters, and other letters which the Chineſe did not underſtand; they were Syriac characters. The emperor had notice of it, and had a copy of it ſent him, and did command, that the monument ſhould be carefully kept in a Pagode *, where it now is, about a mile from Sigan. The ſubſtance of the inſcription on the table is as follows:

'There is a firſt principle of all things, of a 'ſpiritual and intelligent nature, who created all 'things out of nothing, and who ſubſiſts in three 'perſons. At man's creation, he endued him with 'original juſtice, made him king of the univerſe, 'and maſter of his own paſſions; but the devil, 'drawing him into temptation, corrupted his mind, 'and diſturbed the inward peace and innocence of 'his heart. Hence ſprang all thoſe misfortunes 'which overwhelm human kind, and all thoſe different factions into which we are crumbled.

'Mankind, who ſince that fatal fall did always 'walk in darkneſs, would never have found out 'the path of truth, if one of theſe three perſons 'of the Divinity had not taken upon him the 'nature of man, which man, we call the Meſſia. 'An angel proclaimed his coming, and ſome time 'after he was born of a virgin in Judea. This mi-

'raculous

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* *An idol's temple.*

‘ raculous birth was ſet forth by a new ſtar in
‘ the heavens. Some kings, who obſerved the ſtar,
‘ came and offered preſents to the Divine Infant,
‘ that ſo the law and predictions of the twenty
‘ four prophets might be accompliſhed.

‘ He governed the world, by inſtituting a very
‘ plain, ſpiritual, and heavenly law. He eſtabliſh’d
‘ eight beatitudes. He endeavoured to diſſuade
‘ men from ſetting their hearts on the good things
‘ of this world, in order to fix in them a love of
‘ thoſe good things which will never fail. He
‘ ſet forth the beautifulneſs of the three principal
‘ virtues. He ſet open the gates of heaven to the
‘ juſt, to which place he himſelf aſcended at mid-
‘ day, leaving on earth twenty-ſeven books of his
‘ doctrine, proper for the converſion of the world.

He inſtituted baptiſm for the waſhing away ſin,
‘ and laid down his life on the croſs for all men
‘ without exception. His miniſters cut not off
‘ their beards, but have their heads ſhaved, ex-
‘ cepting a circle of hair which they leave on.
‘ They have no ſervants, for they make them-
‘ ſelves ſuperior to none, whether in the height
‘ of proſperity, or in the depth of affliction. In-
‘ ſtead of heaping up riches, they willingly impart
‘ their little all to thoſe who are in want. They
‘ faſt, both for mortification of themſelves, and
‘ in obſervance of the laws. They reverence their
‘ ſuperiors, and honour all good men. They pray
‘ ſeven times a day for the dead and the living.
‘ They offer ſacrifice every week to purge them
‘ from their ſins, and to purify their hearts.

‘ Even kings, who follow not this law, what-
‘ ſoever they do, can never make themſelves truly
‘ eſtimable among men. In the reign of Tai-tçoum,
‘ a moſt wiſe and honoured prince, Olopoüen
‘ coming from Judea, after a long courſe of
‘ dangers by ſea and land, at laſt arrived at China

‘ in the year of our Lord 636. The emperor, ‘ having notice of it, ſent a Colao to meet him ‘ in the ſuburbs of the imperial city, with orders ‘ to conduct him to the palace. When he came ‘ there, his law was examined, and the truth of ‘ it acknowledged; ſo that the emperor, in favour of ‘ him, made the following edict.

‘ No particular name comprehends the true law, ‘ neither are the ſaints fixed to one place; they ‘ are ſcattered thro’ the whole world, that they ‘ may be univerſally uſeful. A man of Judea, of ‘ exemplary virtue, is arrived at our court: we ‘ have examined his doctrine, and found it admirable, ‘ with no mixture of pride, and built upon ‘ thoſe principles which ſuppoſe the world had a ‘ beginning. This law teaches the way of ſalvation, ‘ and cannot but be extremely uſeful to all ‘ our ſubjects. I therefore judge it neceſſary, that ‘ it be taught them. Afterwards, he commanded ‘ that a church ſhould be built, and nominated ‘ one and twenty perſons to ſerve that cure.

‘ Kao, the ſon of Tai-çoum, ſucceeded him in ‘ the year 651, and endeavoured to make that religion ‘ flouriſh which his father had received. He ‘ highly honoured the biſhop of Olopoüen, and ‘ built in all the provinces churches for the true ‘ God; ſo that the Bonzes ſome years after, being ‘ alarmed at the progreſs which chriſtianity ‘ had made, uſed all means to ſtop the courſe of it.

‘ The perſecution was great, and the number ‘ of the faithful grew ſmall, when our Lord raiſed ‘ up two perſons of extraordinary zeal, who defended ‘ the faith with ſo much vigour, that in ‘ a little time it recovered its former luſtre. The ‘ emperor on his part ſtrove to confirm it more ‘ and more; even ſo far, as to command five ‘ kings to go to church, and proſtrate themſelves ‘ before the altar, and to erect other churches in

‘ ſeveral towns to the honour of the God of the chri- ‘ ſtians. Thus the foundation, ſhook by the ſtrug- ‘ gle which the Bonzes made, became more ſolid and ‘ better fixed than ever.

‘ In the mean while the prince himſelf continued ‘ to give great ſigns of his piety; he made the pic- ‘ tures of his predeceſſors be carried to church; he ‘ offered himſelf an hundred pieces of ſilk upon the ‘ altars; paid mighty reſpect to Ki-ho, a miſſio- ‘ nary newly arrived out of Judea, and all his life- ‘ time omitted nothing that was neceſſary for the pro- ‘ pagating the goſpel in his dominions. Venmin, ‘ who ſucceeded him in the year 757, inherited his ‘ virtue as well as crown. He built five churches. ‘ He was famous for his other greater qualities as well ‘ as for his care of religion.

‘ The following emperors confirmed chriſtianity ‘ by their edicts and examples. We can pray for ‘ them without fearing that our prayers will not be ‘ heard, for they were humble and peaceable; they ‘ bore with the faults of their neighbours; and did ‘ good to all ſorts of men. Which is the true cha- ‘ racter of chriſtianity, and is the true way to make ‘ peace and plenty flow into the greateſt kingdoms.

‘ Others of them were exerciſed in the works of ‘ the brighteſt charity. The emperor So-tçoum of- ‘ fered at the altar, and built churches; beſides he ‘ aſſembled together the prieſts of four churches, ‘ and for forty days ſerved them himſelf with great ‘ reſpect; he fed the poor, cloathed the naked, ‘ healed the ſick, and buried the dead. It is to keep ‘ up the memory of their great actions, and to let ‘ poſterity know the preſent ſtate of the chriſtian re- ‘ ligion here, that we have erected this monument in ‘ the year 782.

This, ſir, is a faithful epitome of what is remarkable in this famous remain of Chineſe antiquity. The Bonzes, who keep it in one of their temples near Sigan, have erected, over-againſt it, a long table of marble every way like it, with encomiums upon the gods of the country, to diminiſh as much as they can the glory which the chriſtian religion receives from thence. The chronicle of China confirms, by the order and ſucceſſion of the emperors, what the monument ſays of it; but I am apt to think, that the virtues of thoſe emperors mentioned therein are exalted too much, ſome of whom, in hiſtory, are ſaid to have done as much for paganiſm, as this ſays they did for chriſtianity. However that be, it is a plain teſtimony, that the faith was preached there, and received by a great many perſons. It flouriſhed there at leaſt an hundred fourſcore and ſix years, and perhaps much longer, for we have no account of its failure, for the very memory of it was loſt; and, when the new miſſionaries of our ſociety came thither, they found no ſign or footſtep of it.

It was in the year 1552, that ſaint Xavier went thither in hopes to add this new conqueſt to the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt. It ſeemed that great man had made but an eſſay in the Indies, and, if I may uſe the expreſſion, had but ſerved an apprenticeſhip to that zeal, which he would be perfect maſter of in China. And ſurely Moſes never had a more ardent deſire to enter into the Holy Land, to gather with his people the temporal riches of that country, than this apoſtle longed to carry into this new world the the treaſures of the goſpel. Both one and t'other died by the providence of God, in a time when their long voyages and infinite labours ſeemed anſwered by a great probability of ſucceſs.

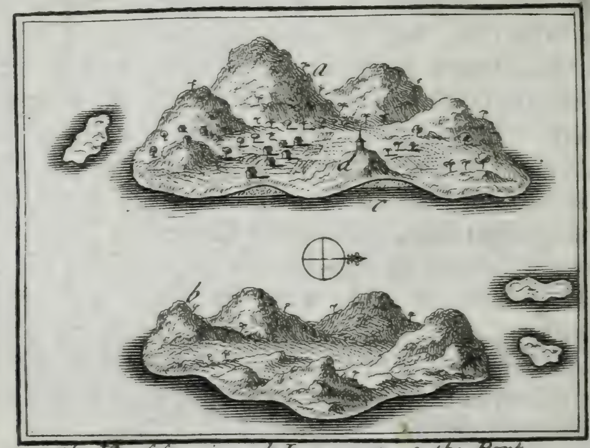
The ſcripture tells us, Moſes's death was a puniſhment to him for his lack of faith; St. Xavier's ſeems to be a reward for the abundance of his. God had a mind to reward his zeal, his labours, and his charity; and was willing to defer, for a time, that torrent of mercy, which he deſigned for the empire of

China, that he might reward his ſervant with that glory, which he had procured for ſo many nations. He died in the iſle of Sancheu, or as we ſpeak it, Sancian, under the juriſdiction of the province of Canton; it is well known, that he lay in the ground ſeveral months, all which time God preſerved him from the uſual corruption; from hence he was carried to Goa, where, from that time, he hath been honoured as the protector of that place, and the apoſtle of the Eaſt.

The touch of his body conſecrated the place of his burial. That iſland became not only a famous place, but alſo an Holy Land. Even the heathen honoured it, and fled thither, as to a city of refuge. In the mean time pirates haunted thoſe coaſts, that no veſſels dared to go thereabouts; ſo that the place, where this ſacred tomb lay, was quite unknown to the Europeans; and it is but a little while ago, that they diſcovered it by a particular accident.

In the year 1688, a Portugueſe veſſel which, coming from Goa, had on board the governor of Macao, was ſeized by a ſudden guſt of wind, and forced to let the ſhip drive towards theſe iſlands, do what they could. They caſt anchor between the iſles of Sanciam and Lampacao, which were ſo near one another, as to make a kind of haven. Contrary winds, continuing eight days, gave father Caroccio a jeſuit, who was on board, an opportunity of ſatisfying his devout reſolutions. He went on ſhore, and was reſolved, in ſpite of danger, to go in ſearch of the ſaint's tomb. The pilot and moſt part of the ſailors followed him, and they ſearched the whole iſland, but to no purpoſe.

At laſt a Chineſe, an inhabitant of the place, imagining with himſelf, what it was which they ſo ardently ſought after, undertook to guide them, and led them to a place which all the inhabitants reverenced, and where he himſelf began to perform actions and geſtures of piety. The father, who could not underſtand him, began to ſearch about for ſome ſign or mark of the ſepulchre, and found at laſt a ſtone five cubits long, and three broad, upon which were cut theſe words in Latin, Portugueſe, Chineſe, and Japonneſe, *Here* Xavier, *a man truly apoſtolical, was buried.* Then they all fell on their knees, and did with devotion kiſs that earth, which the tears and the laſt groans of that apoſtle had ſanctified. The inhabitants of the place came in and followed the example of the Portugueſe: even the Engliſh, for one of their veſſels came to an anchor in the ſame place, came thither to honour the ſaint, and prayed a great while at his tomb. Father Caroccio ſome time after ſaid maſs in his Pontificalibus, while the two veſſels, the Engliſh and Portugueſe, did ſeveral times diſcharge their artillery, and gave marks of their common joy.



a, the Iſle of Sanciam, b. Lampacao, c. the Port. d. the Tomb of Saint Xavier.

Laſtly, to preſerve the memory of that holy place, they reſolved to build a good ſquare wall all round the tomb, and to dig a ditch to ſecure it from all inundations. In the midſt, between theſe walls, they raiſed the ſtone which they found overturned, and built an altar, as a memorial of the auguſt ſacrifice of the euchariſt, which had been offered up there, which might alſo ſerve to celebrate it upon again, if either accident or devotion ſhould carry the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt thither any more. The people of the place did themſelves aſſiſt towards the carrying on this little work, and ſhewed as much zeal for the honour of the ſaint as the Chriſtians did.

This place is of itſelf very pleaſant. You ſee there a ſmall plain extended from the bottom of a hill, on one ſide of which is a wood, on the other are gardens cultivated; a rivulet, which turns and twines about, renders the iſland very fertile. It is not uninhabited, as ſome have wrote, there are ſeventeen villages in it. The land is manured, even the very mountains; and the inhabitants are ſo far from wanting the neceſſaries of life, that the growth of their iſland is enough to carry on ſuch commerce as yields them a moderate plenty.

You will eaſily pardon me, ſir, for this ſhort digreſſion concerning St. Francis Xavier. A miſſionary can't ſpeak of him, without being naturally inclined to enlarge about every thing that concerns this great man. It was he, who ſettled upon a ſolid foundation all the miſſions into the Indies; and who, in the laſt years of his life, encouraged his brethren to enterprize the great deſign of the converſion of China. His zeal paſſed into their minds and hearts; and, tho' every body but Xavier thought it impoſſible that the deſign ſhould take effect, the fathers Roger, Paſio, and Ricci, all three Italians, did reſolve to ſpend all their pains, and, if it were neceſſary, all their blood in this great work.

The difficulties, which the devil raiſed, did not diſcourage them. They enter'd one after the other into the ſouthern provinces. The novelty of their doctrine brought them auditors, and the ſanctity of their lives made thoſe auditors have a favourable opinion of them. At firſt they heard them with pleaſure, and afterwards with admiration. Father Ricci, above all, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his zeal and underſtanding; for he was thoroughly inſtructed in the cuſtoms, the religion, laws, and ceremonies of the country, all which he had ſtudied a long time before at Macao. He ſpoke their language fluently, and underſtood their writings perfectly; this was joined to a ſweet, eaſy, complaiſant temper, and a certain inſinuating behaviour, which none but himſelf had, which it was hard to reſiſt; but above all, an ardour which the Holy Ghoſt inſtils into the workmen of the Lord's harveſt; all this, I ſay, got him the repute of a great man and an apoſtle.

Not but that he met with a great many rubs in the work of God. The devil overthrew his deſigns more than once. He had the ſuperſtition of the people, the jealouſy of the Bonzes, and the ill humour of the Mandarines to deal with; all which violently oppoſed what he was about to eſtabliſh. Yet he never gave over; and God gave him perſeverance, a virtue very neceſſary in the beginning ſuch enterpriſes as theſe, which always meet with oppoſition, and which men of the beſt intentions in the world ſometimes let fall, diſcouraged for want of preſent ſucceſs to fortify them in the proſecution of their deſign.

Father Ricci, after many years fruitleſs labour, had, at laſt, the comfort of ſeeing the goſpel flouriſh. He made many and mighty converſions in the provinces. The Mandarines themſelves opened their eyes to the light of our holy faith, which our miſſionary carried even almoſt as far as to the court. The emperor Vanli, then reigning, received him with great marks of reſpect and kindneſs; and, among divers European curioſities, which the father preſented to him, he was ſo taken with ſome pictures of our Saviour and the Virgin Mary, that he ordered them to be ſet up in an high place in his palace, as things to which he would have a reſpect ſhewn.

This kind welcome from the emperor gained him the good will of all the lords at court; and, in ſpite of the oppoſition of ſome magiſtrates, who, according to their cuſtom, could never deal handſomely by a ſtranger, he bought an houſe at Pekin, and gained ſuch a foundation and eſtabliſhment there, as hath been ſince the ſupport of all the miſſions into this empire.

Religion was by this means known (and without it, it would have been impoſſible to have ſupported it;) thus it came into eſteem, and was preached by the new miſſionaries, who made great advantage of father Ricci's firſt labours. The court and all the provinces reſounded every where with that adorable name *, which the Jews heretofore, thro' the reſpect they bore to it, never ſo much as pronounced to their proſelites, and which the new-converted Chineſe named to their countrymen with a reſpect yet greater; for the European workmen being but few, gave an opportunity to ſeveral Mandarines, to preach the goſpel, and there were ſome of them who by their zeal and underſtanding promoted the affairs of religion as much as the moſt fervent miſſionaries.

It is true, that theſe ſucceſſes were ſome time after interrupted; for it is the character of truth, that it makes itſelf enemies, and the lot of the chriſtian religion always to be perſecuted. Providence being deſirous to try the fidelity of theſe new chriſtians, and to re-inflame the zeal of their miniſters, permitted

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* *Jehovah.*

ted the idol prieſts to oppoſe the preaching of the goſpel; ſo that it very near came to paſs, that a cabal of ſome Bonzes, ſupported by ſeveral Mandarines, had, by the deſtruction of father Ricci, overthrown in one minute the work of ſeveral years.

But the greateſt danger to this holy man and his miſſion came from his own brethren, I mean the European chriſtians. Some Portugueſe of Macao, incenſed againſt the jeſuits, reſolved to deſtroy them in China, altho' with them they deſtroyed the chriſtian religion there. They could not but know what the holy intentions of thoſe fathers were in going thither; yet they accuſed them as ſpies, who, under pretence of preaching the goſpel, ſecretly managed a conſpiracy, and had a deſign to ſeize upon China by the force and aſſiſtance of the Japonneſe, Hollanders, and chriſtians of that country.

It muſt needs be a great amazement to any one, who obſerves the rage and bitterneſs of theſe falſe brethren, who, altho' engaged by their religion to propagate the work of God even with the loſs of their lives, were yet reſolved to deſtroy it by ſuch vile and falſe aſperſions.

This ridiculous ſtory, which was ſet forth with heat and violence, and built upon ſome circumſtances which carried ſome ſhow of truth, eaſily found credit among the Chineſe, naturally exceſſively ſuſpicious, and very well ſatisfied by a long experience, that the leaſt commotions or rebellion might bring the moſt powerful empires to ruin.

The perſecution was very ſharp, the weak chriſtians were ſcandalized, and did apoſtatize from the faith. Father Martinez was taken up, impriſoned, and baſtinado'd, till at length he died thro' his torments: and, if this accuſation of the chriſtians had ever came to the knowledge of the court, it is very probable it would have been the utter overthrow of chriſtianity here. But our Lord ſtopp'd the growing evil in its bud, and, by the means of a Mandarine, a particular friend of father Ricci, gave peace to the miſſion, and liberty to the evangelical workmen.

After having ſurmounted a great many obſtacles of this nature, and preached the goſpel to an infinite number of people, this fervent miſſionary died. The heathens judged him the wiſeſt and moſt underſtanding man of his age; the chriſtians loved him as their father, and the preachers of the goſpel made him a model whereby to form themſelves. He had the ſatisfaction of dying in the midſt of a plentiful harveſt, but was diſturbed, that there were ſo few workmen to get it in; ſo that he recommended nothing more earneſtly to his brethren, who aſſiſted him in his laſt ſickneſs, than to receive with all imaginable joy and comfort all thoſe who ſhould come to partake of their labours: *If they find*, ſays he to them, *when they arrive here, croſſes from the enemies of chriſtianity, do you ſweeten the bitterneſs of them, by demonſtrations of the moſt tender friendſhip, and moſt inflamed charity.*

The churches of China, of which he was the main ſupport, were ſhaken by his fall; for altho' the emperor for ſome years afterwards ſhewed himſelf ſomewhat favourable to the chriſtian religion, yet, in 1615, there aroſe againſt it the cruelleſt tempeſt that it had ever yet ſuffered. It was occaſioned by one of the principal Mandarines of Nankim *. They chiefly ſet upon the paſtors, thereby the eaſier to diſperſe the flock. Some were cruelly beaten, others baniſhed, almoſt all impriſoned, and carried afterwards to Macao, after having the honour of ſuffering a thouſand injuries and reproaches for the love of Jeſus Chriſt.

The tempeſt laſted near ſix years; but at laſt the perſecutor, being himſelf accuſed, was, by God's judgment, deprived both of his offices and alſo of his life. His death gave the chriſtians ſome reſpite, who, after that, multiplied more than ever, thro' the labours of a great many miſſionaries. It was about this time †, that the right reverend fathers of the order of St. Dominick joined with us; many of whom do at this time labour in China with a great deal of zeal and ſucceſs.

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* *Chinkio.*

About this time father Adam Schaal, a German, appeared at court, and added a new luſtre to chriſtianity, which had but newly ſprang up again. He was perfectly ſkilled in mathematicks, and made uſe of his knowledge therein to obtain the emperor's kindneſs; he was, in a little time, ſo highly in the emperor's favour, that he thought he ſhould be able, by his own intereſt alone, to eſtabliſh the chriſtian religion ſolidly. He began to make uſe of his intereſt with good ſucceſs, when an inſurrection overturned the whole government, and with it all his promiſing hopes.

This great ſtate, whoſe power ſeemed to be enough to ſecure it from the moſt violent ſhock whatever, was made ſenſible then, that there is nothing conſtant in this world. Some robbers being met together, by the acceſs of multitudes of malecontents, who joined them, formed vaſt armies: they burned towns, and plundered whole provinces. China preſently changed its aſpect, and, from the moſt flouriſhing empire, became the ſtage for the moſt bloody war. Never were there ſeen ſo many murthers and barbarities. The emperor, being ſurpriſed at Pekin, ſtrangled himſelf for fear of falling into the hands of the victors. The uſurper was ſoon drove out of the throne by the Tartars, who ſeiz'd upon it. The princes of the blood, who in different places were proclaimed emperors, were vanquiſhed or killed. Then all the Mandarines roſe, ſome declaring for Tartary, others for liberty: others only carried on the fighting trade, in hopes to make their private fortunes from the publick ruin.

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† 1631.

Some of thoſe laſt were rather monſters than men, who giving themſelves to all that licentiouſneſs, which the moſt inhuman cruelty and barbarity could prompt them to, made whole provinces deſolate, and ſhed more blood to ſatisfy their brutality, than the moſt ambitious prince in the world would for the conqueſt of an empire.

Religion, which groaned amidſt thoſe troubles, had the comfort nevertheleſs of ſeeing many great perſons converted; one empreſs with her ſon were baptiſed; ſcarce either of them lived after their reception of the faith, the fruits of which they could not enjoy but in the other world. Laſtly, the Tartars by their valour, and by a conduct equal to the policy of ancient Rome, made themſelves maſters of China, and, in a few years, obliged all the provinces to ſubmit to a foreign yoke.

Then we thought religion's caſe deſperate; but God, who needs not the aſſiſtance of men, when he hath a mind to ſupport his own work, inſpired on a ſudden this new prince with a greater affection for the chriſtian religion, than we dared hope for from the Chineſe emperors. He not only took away the government of the mathematicks from the Mahometans, which they had poſſeſſed for 300 years, and gave it to father Adam; but by a ſpecial privilege he ſuffered that father to apply himſelf to him immediately in all things, which concerned the miſſionaries, without firſt paſſing thro' the formalities of the courts of juſtice, who are very ſevere to ſtrangers. This ſignal favour, joined with many others, raiſed up the courage of the chriſtians, and gave the heathens greater liberty to cloſe with the true religion. Many perſons of the beſt quality at Pekin deſired baptiſm; the provinces follow'd the example of the court, and the harveſt became ſo plentiful, that the workmen were too few to gather it in.

Thoſe, who were employed therein, laboured with ſuch an hearty zeal, that we do at this preſent feel the effects of it. There were found perſons of eminent virtue, prudence, and underſtanding, whom God had formed during the troubles and civil wars, and which the Spirit of the Almighty drew out of the chaos, like ſo many ſtars, to ſhed forth the light of the goſpel, unto the moſt hidden parts of this vaſt empire, accompanying their preaching with ſigns and wonders.

Among thoſe extraordinary men, father Faber, a Frenchman, diſtinguiſhed himſelf above the reſt. I had the happineſs to tarry ſome time in that province, which was allotted to his care; and I have, after ſo many years, found the precious remains there, which are the neceſſary conſequences of holineſs. Thoſe, who were witneſſes of his actions, tell to their children the miracles which he wrought to confirm them in their faith; and, altho' one need not believe all which they relate of him, we cannot nevertheleſs deny, that God did in many occaſions give an extraordinary concurrence in ſeveral great things which he enterpriſed for his glory.

It is worth knowing after what manner he founded the miſſion of Hanchum, a town of the firſt rank in Xenſi, two days journey diſtant from the capital. He was invited thither by a Mandarine, and a ſmall number of chriſtians, which he found there, made him the more laborious to increaſe their number. God put into his hands a means of doing this which he never expected. One of the great boroughs, which in China are as big as the towns, was then over-run by a prodigious multitude of locuſts, which eat up all the leaves of the trees, and gnawed the graſs to the very roots.

The inhabitants, after having uſed all imaginable means, thought fit to apply themſelves to father Faber, whoſe repute was every where talked of. The father took from thence an occaſion to explain the principal myſteries of our faith; and added, that, if they would ſubmit themſelves thereto, they ſhould not only be delivered from the preſent plague, but that alſo they ſhould obtain innumerable bleſſings, and eternal happineſs. They embraced it willingly, and the father, to keep his word with them, marched in ceremony into the highways, in his ſtole and his ſurplice; and ſprinkled up and down holy water, accompanying his action with the prayers of the church, but eſpecially with a lively faith. God heard the voice of his ſervant, and the next day all the inſects diſappeared.

But the people, whoſe minds were wholly bent upon the things of this world, as ſoon as they ſaw themſelves delivered, neglected the counſel which the miſſionary had given them. They were therefore immediately puniſhed, and the plague grew worſe than it was before. Then they accuſed one the other of their want of faith; they ran in crowds to the father's houſe, and caſting themſelves at his feet: We will not riſe up, father, ſaid they, till you have pardoned us. We confeſs our fault, and proteſt, that, if you will a ſecond time deliver us from this affliction with which Heaven threatens us, the whole borough will immediately acknowledge your God, who alone can work ſuch great miracles.

The father, to increaſe their faith, made them beg a great while. At laſt, inſpired as before, he ſent up his prayer, and ſprinkled his holy-water, and by the next day there was not an inſect to be found in the fields. Then the whole borough, being brought over to the truth, followed the guidance of God's holy Spirit; they were all inſtructed and formed into a church, which, tho' it was abandoned for ſome years, is ſtill reckoned one of the devouteſt miſſions in China.

They ſay alſo of this father, that he has been carried over rivers thro' the air, that they have ſeen him in an extaſy, that he foretold his own death, and did ſeveral other ſuch wonders; but the greateſt miracle of all was his life, which he ſpent in the continual exerciſe of all the apoſtolical virtues, in a profound humility, in a ſevere mortification, in a ſettled patience, proof againſt all ſorts of injuries, in a flaming charity, and a tender devotion to the Mother of God, all which he practiſed to his death; to the edification, and, I may ſay, the admiration even of the idolaters.

While chriſtianity ſpread its root deep throughout the provinces, it flouriſhed every day more and more at Pekin; the emperor did not ſeem far from it. He came often to our church, and did there adore the divine Majeſty in ſuch an humble manner, as would have been commendable in a chriſtian. There are ſtill writings from his own hand, wherein he acknowledges the beauty and the purity of our holy law; but a heart ſet upon ſenſual pleaſures can never follow the directions of the Spirit. When father Adam has been preſſing upon him: You *are*, ſaid he, *in the right; but how can you expect that any one ſhould be able to practiſe all theſe laws? Take away two or three of the difficulteſt, and, after that, perhaps we may agree to the reſt.* Thus this young prince, divided between the voice of human nature and grace, thought, that we might favour nature at the expence of religion; but the father gave him to underſtand, that we were only the publiſhers, not the authors of the goſpel. Nevertheleſs, my lord, ſays the father to him one day, tho' we propoſe to the corrupt world a body of morals, which ſurpaſs their forces to comply with, and myſteries which are above their reaſon to comprehend, we do not from thence deſpair to have our doctrine received; becauſe we do it by his order, who can enlighten the moſt darkened underſtanding, and ſtrengthen the moſt weak nature.

Theſe difficulties, which the emperor look'd upon as inſuperable, did not take any thing from that kindneſs and reſpect which he bore to father Adam. He always called him his father, placed always his confidence in him: he made him twenty viſits in two years; and gave him leave to build two churches in Pekin; and ordered thoſe, which in the perſecution had been demoliſh'd in the provinces, to be rebuilt; nay, granted him whatever could any ways contribute towards the ſolid eſtabliſhment of the faith, which without doubt would have made an infinite progreſs, had not a violent paſſion changed the temper of that prince, and took him away from us at a time when we had the moſt need of a protection: we may juſtly ſay, that his death was owing to an extraordinary grief for the loſs of a concubine. This woman, whom he had taken from her huſband, inclined him to the worſhip of falſe gods, to that exceſs, that he was wholly altered from what he was before, as to his opinions of religion. And at that time it was, that he fell ſick, his mind being full of notions from the Bonzes, who ſwarmed in his palace, and being vehemently tormented by his paſſion, ſo that he could not get a moment's reſt. In the mean while, as he loved the father extremely, ſo was he deſirous to ſee him once more before he died.

At this laſt meeting the good miſſionary's bowels yern'd upon him. He was kneeling at the prince's bed's-feet, whom he had educated as his own ſon, in hopes one day to make him head of the true religion. He ſaw him there under the load of a violent diſtemper, diſturbed with the impure deſires of unlawful love, given up to idols and their prieſts, juſt upon the brink of death, and that death an eternal one. The emperor, who ſaw him in this concern, would not let him ſpeak upon his knees; but raiſed him up, and heard his laſt advice with ſomewhat leſs prejudice againſt it than uſual; ordered him afterwards a preſent of tea, and diſmiſſed him with ſuch marks of tenderneſs as touched him to the bottom of his ſoul, of which he was the more ſenſible, becauſe he never could bring it about, to work in him a true converſion.

His death was equally fatal to the Bonzes, who were thereupon driven from the palace, and to the true religion, which was thereby brought within a nail's breadth of deſtruction. Many churches built upon the coaſts of the maritime provinces were deſtroyed, by an edict which commanded, that every body on the coaſts ſhould retire ten or eleven miles within land, and deſtroy all habitations within that compaſs all round the coaſts, becauſe a famous pirate made uſe of them in carrying on a war againſt the emperor. They were alſo juſt going to ruin Macao, and order was given to drive the Portugueſe thence, when father Adam uſed his utmoſt effort to ſave it. At this time all his credit and intereſt, which he had employed ſo much to the advantage of religion, ended; for, in a little time, he became the object of the moſt bloody perſecution that ever the church ſuffered.

The four Mandarines, who had the regency during the emperor's minority, moved upon different topicks, and eſpecially animated againſt the chriſtians, to whom this father was the main ſupport, put him and three of his companions into priſon. Other preachers of the goſpel were ſummoned to Pekin, who met with the ſame treatment, and were loaded each with nine chains. They burned their books, their beads, and medals, and whatever elſe carried the face of religion; nevertheleſs they ſpared the churches; as for the chriſtian flock, they met with a more mild uſage.

Thoſe famous confeſſors had the honour to be dragged before all the ſeats of judgment. There it was that their enemies did admire their courage. But they were above all moved by the miſerable condition of father Adam. That venerable old man, who but a day or two before was the oracle of the court, and the favourite of a great emperor, now appeared in the form of a ſlave, loaded with chains, and oppreſſed with infirmities, dejected by the weight and burthen of age, but much more by that of calumny which labour'd to blemiſh his innocence. He had a ſort of catarrh which hinder'd him from making his defence; but father Verbieſt forſook him not, and anſwered for him, to his enemies, in ſo ſenſible a manner, that the judges could not enough admire the conſtancy of the perſon accuſed, nor the heroical charity of the perſon who defended him. However, as innocent as he was, he was condemned to be ſtrangled, which is in China an honourable kind of death; but afterwards, as tho' they repented that they had not been unjuſt enough, they repealed the ſentence, and gave another, wherein the father was condemned to be publickly expoſed in the market-place, and be hacked alive into ten thouſand pieces.

The ſupreme court ſent the ſentence to the regency, and to the princes of the blood, to have it confirmed; but God, who had till then ſeemed to have relinquiſhed his ſervant, began to ſpeak in favour of his cauſe by a terrible earthquake. The whole land was confounded at this prodigy. Every body exclaimed that Heaven itſelf would puniſh the injuſtice of the magiſtrates, who therefore, to apeaſe the people, opened all the priſons in the town, and made an act of oblivion for all criminals, excepting the confeſſors of Jeſus Chriſt, who were ſtill kept in chains, as tho' they had been the only victims for whom Heaven had no concern.

But becauſe there appeared divers prodigies, and in particular fire conſumed great part of the court of juſtice, at laſt fear obtained that from theſe unrighteous judges, which innocence could not. They ſet father Adam at liberty, and permitted him to go home to his houſe, till the emperor ſhould otherwiſe diſpoſe of him. This great man blemiſh'd, indeed to outward appearance, by an ignominious ſentence which was never repealed; but in truth full of glory, for having defended the honour of religion, by expoſing his own life, died a little while after, worn away by the toil of an apoſtolical life, but more by the hardſhips and inconveniencies of a troubleſome priſon.

His death was too precious in the eyes of God, to be unaccompany'd with ſome ſignal bleſſing upon the ſorrowful remains of perſecuted chriſtianity. It is true that the miſſionaries of the provinces were baniſhed to Canton, among which three were Dominicans, one Franciſcan (and another of the ſame order died in priſon) and one and twenty jeſuits; yet four were kept at the court, whom the providence of God made uſe of afterwards to ſettle chriſtianity again in its priſtine ſplendor.

God himſelf revenged the innocence of his ſervants. Sony, the firſt Mandarine in the regency, the moſt dangerous enemy the fathers had, died a month or two after. The ſecond, named Soucama, was afterwards indicted and condemned to a cruel death, his goods confiſcated; his children, in number ſeven, had their heads cut off, excepting the third, who was cut to pieces alive, the puniſhment which that wicked judge had deſign'd for father Adam, and with which God chaſtiſed his crimes in the perſons of his children. Yam-quam-ſien, who had been the chief inſtrument in the perſecution, fared no better than them, for after the death of father Adam he was made preſident of the mathematicks, and had the charge of the kalendar of the empire committed to him. Father Verbieſt accuſed him, and plainly made appear the ignorance of this pitiful mathematician.

This was a bold ſtroke, becauſe the preſident's party was very ſtrong, and the flames which had cauſed the perſecution were not yet quenched; but many things concurr'd to give ſucceſs to this enterprize. The underſtanding of the father, the kindneſs which the new emperor had for the Europeans, but eſpecially the particular providence of God which did ſecretly manage this important affair; for it is certain that, in the ſeveral trials whereby they proved the goodneſs of our mathematicks, the heavens did ſo exactly agree with what our fathers had foretold, even above the certainty which our tables and calculations could promiſe us, that it ſeemed as tho' God had guided the ſtars in ſuch a courſe as was neceſſary to juſtify our miſſionaries account of them.

The preſident of the mathematicks uſed his beſt endeavours to defend himſelf; and, becauſe he could not hide his ignorance in aſtronomy, he endeavoured to put upon the judges, and perſuade them that the chriſtian religion contained much greater errors than thoſe he was guilty of. In the midſt of ſome meetings, where the emperor was preſent, he behaved himſelf in ſuch a manner as the emperor could ſcarcely bear with him. He laid his hands acroſs, and cried out as loud as he could: *See here, do but obſerve what theſe fellows adore, and what they would have us worſhip too, a man who was hanged, a perſon who was crucified; let any one judge hereby of their underſtanding and good ſenſe.*

But all theſe excurſions ſerved only to diminiſh his own credit. This wicked perſon, more blameable for his crimes than for his ignorance, loſt his charge, and was condemned to death. Notwithſtanding the emperor ſuſpended the execution of the ſentence by reaſon of his extraordinary old age; but God himſelf executed his ſentence of vengeance. He ſmote him with an horrible ulcer, and, by his ſorrowful death, delivered religion from this monſter of iniquity.

Then the care of the mathematicks was committed to Father Verbieſt, the ancient miſſionaries were recalled to their old churches, but forbid to go about to build new ones, or to labour in the converſion of the Chineſe. Laſtly, to magnify our happineſs, the memory of father Adam was mightily reſpected even at court: he was publickly juſtified and cleared, his charges and titles of honour were remanded him, and his anceſtors made nobility. The emperor himſelf appointed conſiderable ſums of money to build him a ſtately mauſoleum, which at this preſent is to be ſeen, in room of a ſepulchre, adorned with ſtatues and ſeveral marble figures, according to the cuſtom of the country.

Thus it is that God, by a continual viciſſitude, proves the conſtancy of the faithful by perſecution, and encourages them again by puniſhing their perſecutors. This happy peace, which the church gained thro' father Verbieſt's means, encouraged the miſſionaries to repair that damage which hell had done. Beſides the jeſuits, there were ſeveral fathers of the orders of St. Francis, and St. Auguſtin, who entered into the Lord's vineyard. New eſtabliſhments were gained every where, and, notwithſtanding any prohibition, a great number of heathens were converted to the faith, being more afraid of eternal puniſhment, than of that with which the laws of man ſeemed to threaten them.

So ardent and ſo haſty a zeal will perhaps make you amazed; but beſides that charity is always hazardous, many things contributed to confirm thoſe who might elſe be afraid of fatal conſequences. The firſt of theſe is the great authority which the miſſionaries have acquired at court in a ſmall time. Eſpecially the emperor is ſatisfied that they deſpiſe honours, and that at home they lead an auſtere life. The prince is inform'd of this ſuch ways that it is impoſſible he ſhould be deceived. He had information from ſpies, of all that paſſed in their houſes, even ſo nicely as to know their mortifications and corporeal penances.

He ſends alſo to the fathers houſes a young Tartar, of good parts, under pretence to learn philoſophy, but in reality to diſcover the moſt ſecret things in their families, and to be himſelf, I think, an occaſion of offence. He ſtays there a year, without knowing what the prince's intentions are, who, having ſent for him into his preſence, commands him to tell him all the private diſorders of theſe fathers, and eſpecially how they have behaved themſelves towards him. And when theſe young men conſtantly bear teſtimony of the fathers innocence; I ſee very well, ſays the emperor, they have ſtopp'd your mouth with preſents, but I know a way to open it again. Then he makes him be ſeverely ſlaſhed at ſeveral times, yet is not the pain enough to make the young Tartar ſpeak againſt his conſcience; which pleaſes the prince mightily, who would be diſturbed to find himſelf deceived in the idea which he has formed to himſelf of theſe fervent miſſionaries.

This obliged him afterwards to take their part in an aſſembly of the Mandarines, ſome of which do not eſteem the miſſionaries becauſe their outward carriage ſeems ſo good. *As for that matter*, ſays the emperor to them, *neither you nor I can find fault with them. After all that I can do to get information, I am perſuaded that thoſe people teach us nothing but what themſelves practiſe, and they are indeed as modeſt as they appear outwardly to be.*

The ſecond reaſon, which engaged the emperor to favour the miſſionaries, was the great underſtanding of father Verbieſt, who in a ſmall time was reckoned the learnedeſt man in the empire in all faculties. His reputation is every where ſpread abroad, and upon many occaſions his opinion has the repute of an oracle. Some Mandarines one day ſpeaking of the

Trinity, and uſing it as a fable, one of them ſaid, *I do not know what the chriſtians mean, and am as much puzzled as you; but father Verbieſt is of that opinion; what ſay you to that? Can a man of his ſenſe and underſtanding miſtake?* They all held their tongues, and ſeemed to yield to this reaſon. So true is it that the uſe of human learning is ſo far from being (as ſome think) oppoſite to the ſpirit of the goſpel, that it ſometimes ſerves to eſtabliſh it, and to render the moſt obſcure myſteries therein credible.

The third reaſon is that hearty love which the emperor believes the miſſionaries have for him. It is true the miſſionaries omit nothing which they think will pleaſe him; and as they are the moſt inflexible and reſolute againſt doing any thing contrary to their religion, ſo are they the moſt complaiſant and ready to comply with all the reaſonable requeſts of the emperor. A rebellion which happened at this time put it into father Verbieſt's power to do the crown a conſiderable piece of ſervice.

Ouſanguei, that famous Chineſe general, who had brought the Tartars into the empire, thought he had then a good opportunity to drive them out again. He was naturally courageous, and in Xenſi commanded the beſt of the Chineſe ſoldiery, and had got together a vaſt deal of money. This made him ſet up to be emperor, and made him believe he could eaſily compaſs his deſign. And indeed he ſo order'd his matters, that he made himſelf preſently maſter of the three great provinces Yunnan, Suchven, and Queycheu; afterwards a great part of the province of Houquam acknowledged him; ſo that theſe poſſeſſions and Xenſi, which he had in poſſeſſion a good while before, made him maſter of almoſt a third of China.

Theſe conqueſts ſeemed to be the more ſecure to him, becauſe at the ſame time the viceroys of Quamtum and Fokien followed his example, and gave the emperor on that ſide a mighty diverſion; and beſides a powerful pirate, with a great fleet, attacked, and, in a few days, took the iſland Formoſa at the ſame time.

Leſs than this would have ruined the Tartars, if they had all concerted their buſineſs together; but jealouſy, which does often overthrow the firmeſt leagues, ruined their projects. The king of Fokien fell out with that of Formoſa, and, to preſerve himſelf from being damaged by his fleet, made his peace with the emperor, who gave him ſuch aſſiſtance as that he made his party good. The king of Quamtum, being unwilling to be any ways under the direction or command of Ouſanguei, left him, and put himſelf under the protection of the Tartars, who turned all their forces againſt this laſt rebel, more formidable than all the reſt together; for he was maſter of the weſtern provinces, and the ſucceſs, which his troops had hitherto met with, gave them heart and courage enough to undertake any thing.

After the emperor had tried many ſeveral ways to no purpoſe, he plainly ſaw that it was impoſſible to force them from the places where they had intrenched without uſing his great artillery; but the cannon which he had were iron, and ſo heavy that they dared not carry them over ſuch ſteep rocks, as they muſt do to come to him. He thought father Verbieſt might be aſſiſtant to him in this matter; he commanded the father therefore to give directions for caſting ſome cannon after the European manner. The father preſently excuſed himſelf, ſaying, that he had lived his whole life far from the noiſe of war, that he was therefore little inſtructed in thoſe affairs. He added alſo, that being a religious, and wholly employed in the concerns of another world, he would pray for his majeſty's good ſucceſs; but that he humbly begged that his majeſty would be pleaſed to give him leave not to concern himſelf with the warfare of this world.

The father's enemies (for a miſſionary is never without ſome) thought that now they had an opportunity to undermine him; they perſuaded the emperor, that what he commanded the father to do was no ways oppoſite to the will or intention of the goſpel; and that it was no more inconvenient to him to caſt cannon than to caſt machines and mathematical inſtruments, eſpecially when the good and ſafety of the empire were concerned; that therefore without doubt the reaſon of the father's refuſal was becauſe he kept correſpondence with the enemy, or at leaſt becauſe he had no reſpect for the emperor; ſo that at laſt the emperor gave the father to underſtand, that he expected obedience to his laſt order, not only upon pain of loſing his own life, but alſo of having his religion utterly rooted out.

This was to touch him in the moſt ſenſible part, and he was indeed too wiſe to ſtand out for a nicety or a ſcruple at the hazard of loſing all that was valuable: I have already aſſured your majeſty that I have very little underſtanding in caſting cannon, ſaid he to the emperor; but ſince you command me, I will endeavour to make your workmen underſtand what our books direct in this affair. He took therefore upon himſelf the care of this work, and the cannon was proved before the emperor, and found to be extraordinary good. The emperor was ſo well pleaſed with the work, that he pulled off his mantle, and, in the preſence of the whole court, gave it to father Verbieſt for a token of his affection.

All the pieces of cannon were made very light and ſmall, but ſtrengthened with a ſtock of wood from the mouth to the breech, and girt with ſeveral bands of iron; ſo that the cannons were ſtrong enough to bear the force of powder, and light enough to be carried thro' any, even the worſt roads.

This new artillery did every way anſwer what they propoſed from it. The enemy were obliged to leave their intrenchments in diſorder, and ſoon after to capitulate; for they did not think it poſſible to hold out againſt thoſe any longer, who could deſtroy them without coming themſelves into reach.

Ouſanguei was himſelf dead; his ſon Hom-hoa, who carried on the war, ſtrangled himſelf thro' deſpair; and the reſt of them were in a ſmall time utterly routed: ſo that the emperor then began to reign in peace, and continued more and more to ſhew marks of favour and affection to the miſſonaries; ſo that father Verbieſt has often ſighing ſaid, that the Lord's vineyard was now open, that the heathens themſelves gave liberty to enter upon the harveſt, but that yet there were ſcarce any workmen to bring it in.

They ſend to him for paſtors from every place; Tartary, the kingdom of Corea, the provinces of China, which have been left deſtitute by the death of their ancient paſtors, invite, or rather preſs him to ſuccour them. Neither does this ſcarcity come from the Europeans want of zeal, but from the differences which have aroſe between the ſacred congregation, who ſend vicars apoſtolical into the Eaſt, and the king of Portugal, who pretends to a right to nominate all the biſhops there, excluſively to any ſuperior eccleſiaſtical power.

This diſpute cools the ardour of thoſe fervent miſſionaries, who dare not engage themſelves where they muſt incur either the indignation of their holy father, or of a mighty prince, both which things are very formidable. And thus the work of God ſtood ſtill, and thoſe precious minutes were loſt, which the favour of a great emperor, and the diligence of a zealous miſſionary, might have made ſo uſeful to the firm eſtabliſhing our holy faith. But this is one of the *arcana* of providence, which, after it had confounded all the oppoſition of the enemies of the goſpel, even at the expence of working miracles, does ſometimes ſuffer that the zeal of catholicks ſhould do more harm to religion, than the hatred and jealouſy of idolaters.

Some time after, my lord biſhop of Heliopolis was ſent by the ſacred congregation with ſome French eccleſiaſticks, full of ardour to reform and increaſe the new chriſtianity. This courageous prelate had once already miſſed his voyage: for contrary winds having obliged him ſometime before to put in at Manilla, a conſiderable iſland under the Spaniſh government, he was taken up upon ſuſpicion there, and obliged to return back into Europe by the way of Mexico. This accident, which had broke his firſt meaſures, ſerved only to fill his mind with new and thoſe greater ones. He came to Paris, where his good intentions were well known. Rome heard him with pleaſure, and followed his projects in all that reſpected the eaſtern miſſions; ſo that he came honoured with a power from the holy ſee, and laded with the alms of the faithful, who expected nothing leſs from his zeal than the converſion of the new world.

He therefore once more paſſed over the ſeas, and happily arrived at China, where he began to ſcatter abroad that flame which would warm all the miſſionaries. The jeſuits, and other religious, not only acknowledged his authority, but alſo took the new oath which the ſacred congregation had appointed, altho' the king of Portugal had abſolutely forbid it. For they thought, that that prince, in whom the love of religion had always prevailed before his private intereſt, would not take it ill when he ſhould know, that their refuſal of it might have occaſioned the deſtruction of chriſtianity in China, and perhaps of the miſſions in all the other parts of the Eaſt.

This was matter of great joy to the biſhop, who, after his happy beginning, made ready, according to his former notions, to new till this new vineyard of the Lord, whither he thought himſelf ſent like the prophet heretofore *. *Ecce conſtitui te ſuper gentes, ut deſtruas, & diſperdas, & diſſipes, &c.* But God Almighty was ſatisfy'd with his good intentions, and took him to himſelf a few months after his arrival. His death greatly ſurprized all the faithful, it did eſpecially afflict the fervent eccleſiaſticks, who were the companions of his voyage; the other miſſionaries ſubmitted with reſignation to the will of God, being perſuaded, that whatſoever providence appoints is always for his glory, and the good of the elect, if they make a right uſe of it.

This was ſweetened by the arrival of two other biſhops, who a little while after ſupplied his place under the title of Vicars Apoſtolical. The firſt was monſieur d'Argolis, an Italian of the order of St. Francis, noted among thoſe of his order, for his excellent virtues and extraordinary knowledge. He had been employed in the chiefeſt buſineſs there, and our holy father thought he could not make choice of a wiſer man than he to place at the helm of ſo flouriſhing a miſſion. As he went by Siam, monſieur Conſtance, underſtanding his worth, preſented him to the king, who would fain have kept him in his kingdom; but, becauſe the orders of the holy ſee obliged him to go farther, he reſolved at leaſt to ſhew him ſome marks of his eſteem and affection towards him, in ordering him, and two of his companions of the ſame order, a conſiderable penſion; ſo that, had it not been for the revolutions which a little while after happened in his kingdom, this prince, worthy of a better fortune, would have had his miſſionaries in China, as well as the moſt zealous princes in Europe.

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* *Jer.* I. 10.

Since this wiſe prelate hath been in China, the natural ſweetneſs of his temper hath very much contributed to the comfort of the faithful, and converſion of the heathen. He hath viſited all the provinces which the holy ſee committed to his care, conſecrating prieſts, teaching and exhorting them, adminiſtring the ſacrament of confirmation, uniting all their affections as much as poſſibly he could, whoſe different intereſts ſeemed to have cooled their mutual charity to one another in Jeſus Chriſt. And tho' one would think that the Portugueſe could never have a reſpect for him, becauſe their pretenſions are wholly oppoſite to this inſtitution of vicars apoſtolical, yet he has behaved himſelf with ſo much prudence, that all nations here think themſelves particularly obliged to him.

The ſecond biſhop, whom the holy ſee has dignified with the title of Vicar Apoſtolical, is monſieur de Baſilée a Chineſe, educated by the fathers of St. Francis's order, afterwards taking upon himſelf the order of St. Dominick. When he was only a miſſionary, he had a flaming zeal for the converſion of his dear country, and, during the perſecution of father Adam, he was the main ſupport of religion in all the provinces which he travelled thro', and ſtrengthened in the faith. When he was conſecrated biſhop, he performed all his duties perfectly well, and the holy ſee did ſo far approve of his conduct, as to let him nominate his ſucceſſor. He nominated his vicar-general the reverend father de Leoniſſa, an Italian of St. Francis's order, who in his private life might have been a pattern to the moſt ſtrict religious, and, in the important employment of vicar apoſtolical, has ſhewn, that he has all that zeal, all that prudence, and all that conſtancy, which the government of a great church requires.

My lord biſhop of Baſilée, after he had thus choſen this worthy ſucceſſor of his apoſtleſhip, fell ſick at Nankim, and died full of thoſe happy viſions which God gives even in this world to his ſaints. At his death, that faith ſhone brightly which had animated him in his life-time; and his laſt minutes, wherein he appeared to be filled with the moſt ſenſible touches of chriſtian hope, ſeemed to give him an antepaſt of the joy of paradiſe. All his trouble was for the miſſionaries, by whom he was affectionately beloved, and for the chriſtians, who loſt in him the firſt prieſt, the firſt religious, and the firſt biſhop that ever China had yet given to chriſtianity. And as his bleſſed memory was every where ſpread abroad, they have ſet up his picture in ſeveral places; which the reverend father de Leoniſſa ſent to the ſacred congregation, to preſerve the memory of a prelate, whoſe own merit, as well as our particular obligations to him, ought to make eternally reſpected.

Beſides this, the pope honoured mr. Maigrot and mr. Pin, with the title of Vicars Apoſtolical, both of them doctors of the Sorbon, diligent, zealous, and ſet upon following the intentions of the holy ſee, and in a word, companions of mr. Heliopolis, and inheritors of a double portion of his ſpirit.

If the number of miſſionaries had been anſwerable to that of the paſtors, the churches in China had now been perfectly filled; but, as I have ſaid, the over care, which every one has taken to provide for it excluſively of others, has rendered people leſs deſirous of going. Good men, nay, even thoſe who have occaſioned theſe diſorders, have mourned for them in ſecret. Some zealous perſons have endeavoured to remedy this. My lord biſhop of Munſter and Paderborn, whom the care of his own dioceſe did not hinder from extending his care even as far as the Eaſt, gave a ſettlement for ſix miſſionaries for ever to China; but, dying a little while after, his laſt will was never executed. Others in France, in Spain, and in Italy, took a great deal of pains to help this forſaken miſſion, but they could never compaſs their deſigns.

Lewis the Great, who is himſelf as zealous for eſtabliſhing the goſpel as all the other princes put together, among the great deſigns which he has been intent upon to make religion flouriſh in Europe, thought, that he ought not to neglect that good which he might do in Aſia. He was very ſenſible of the neceſſities of China, which father Verbieſt had repreſented to him in one of his letters, in the moſt ſenſible manner in the world; and, altho' he very well knew, that he could not make miſſionaries (a quality which nobody can give us but the vicar of Jeſus Chriſt) he doubted not but that religiouſes who were exactly ſkilled in mathematicks, in attaining, according to his orders, an exact knowledge in aſtronomy, might at the ſame time, with good ſucceſs, labour according to the deſign of their inſtitution, in the converſion of infidels. He was very well ſatisfied, that, of all the means which human prudence could advantageouſly make uſe of in the moſt holy actions, there were none which promoted the concerns of religion in China more than the mathematicks.

Being therefore willing at once to ſatisfy his zeal for the advancement of the goſpel, and the deſire which he had of bringing the ſciences to perfection, he made choice of ſix jeſuits, whom he thought capable of giving good ſatisfaction to the learned, and inſtruction to intelligent perſons. Thoſe, who were thus appointed, could have wiſhed they had all the abilities neceſſary for this employment. They did nevertheleſs ſet out with a good will, being ready to ſacrifice their lives and all their ſmall talents to the greater glory of God, and by conſequence to the pious deſigns of the greateſt prince in the world.

When we came into China, we found it in the condition I have been relating, the harveſt was plentiful every where, but it was almoſt deſtitute of workmen; or (to make uſe of father Intorcetta's words, one of the moſt noted miſſionaries) drowned in thoſe tears, which the ſorrow of ſeeing herſelf abandoned forced continually from her: *Benedictus Deus, qui fecit nobiſcum miſericordiam ſuam, liberavit vos à naufragio, ut prope naufragam noſtram miſſionem ab aquis lacrimarum ſummique mæroris eriperet; vos omnes in corde ſervo, & tanquam veros Societatis filios viroſque Apoſtolicos intimis animi præcordiis amplector, &c.* Thus he ſpake to us in his firſt letter, to encourage us to aſſiſt in the glorious labours of this miſſion.

Providence put it into our power in a little time to employ ourſelves uſefully there; and if we had done no other good than was the drawing after us by our example ſeveral other miſſionaries who followed us, and who now are full of their holy labours in the work of God, it would be a great comfort to us, and a very great advantage to China. But that which is much more comfortable is, that we have hereby contributed very much towards removing thoſe lets and hinderances to the propagating the goſpel of which I ſpake before; for, at the remonſtrance of father Tachard, ſupported alſo by that of the reverend father general, Innocent XI. ſuſpended the oath. And after, Clement VIII. granted to the king of Portugal to nominate three biſhops, one of Pekin, the other of Nankim, and the third of Macao. And at this preſent, our holy father, who in his ownſelf hath all the zeal, all the piety, and all the wiſdom of his predeceſſors, animated by the ſame ſpirit, and moved (if I might do myſelf the honour of ſaying ſo) with what I have had the honour to repreſent unto him of the preſent ſtate of theſe miſſions, is about to regulate all the particulars therein by the prudent counſel and advice of the ſacred congregation; to the end, that hereafter nothing may be ſo much laid to heart as the intereſt of religion, and that all kingdoms of Europe, being united in the love of Jeſus Chriſt, may with one conſent labour to bring about and perfect this great work.

Thus, ſir, I have given you a general view of the eſtabliſhment and progreſs of chriſtianity in the empire of China, from the preaching of the apoſtles till the laſt times. This church, heretofore very famous, but after that wholly overturned by ſuperſtition, hath at laſt been re-eſtabliſhed one age ago, by one of the greateſt men of our ſociety, and augmented by the labours of a great many miſſionaries, governed by wiſe prelates, honoured by the protection of many emperors, ſupported by the bounty of all the princes of Europe, and, which is more for its glory, perſecuted by all the enemies of truth, and made precious in the eyes of God, by the chains, the baniſhment, and blood of the confeſſors. I am, with all imaginable reſpect,

SIR,

Your moſt humble

and moſt obedient Servant,

L. J.

LETTER XII.

To the moſt Reverend Father De la Chaiſe, *Confeſſor to the King.*

Concerning the Manner how each Miſſionary preaches the Goſpel in China, *and of the Fervency of the New Chriſtians.*

Moſt Reverend Father,

ALtho' the important affairs of China, which detain me at preſent at Rome, require all my application, and ſeem to be my excuſe if I am wanting in performing any parts of my duties ſo exactly as I could deſire, I cannot nevertheleſs in the leaſt forget both the obligations which I myſelf have to you in particular, as well as the miſſions in the Eaſt in general.

It was you, moſt reverend father, who formerly drew out the platform of them, who juſt then made choice of their miniſters, whom your teſtimonials, together with the eſteem of one of the greateſt princes upon earth, have rendered in proceſs of time more renowned than all their particular qualifications.

This royal protection, under which we have undauntedly affronted dangers; thoſe letters written on our behalf to ſovereigns and their officers; thoſe magnificent preſents, thoſe regularly ſettled penſions, thoſe extraordinary helps, (and what we value much more) thoſe ſo grave counſels, favouring ſo much of the ſpirit of God, wherewith you have in a manner hallowed our firſt voyages, and which we ſtill look upon as the ſafeſt rule of our behaviour and conduct, are benefits either received from yourſelf, or procured by your means. 'Tis but juſt, moſt reverend father, that, in what part of the world ſoever we be, we ſhould teſtify our acknowledgments. For my part, I am perſuaded, that one cannot give you more ſolid demonſtrations of them, than by maintaining, by our great zeal, what you have performed to our advantage. I ſuppoſed you would be ſatisfied, and that at leaſt I ſhould perform my duty, by acquainting you with the ſucceſs wherewith it hath pleaſed God to crown our labour; and, what benefits we may hope to reap from the miſſionaries which you yourſelf will form, or at leaſt, who ſhall come to us out of your hands.

In a word, the time I ſhall employ, in writing to you on this ſubject, is ſo far from any ways diminiſhing that due care and conſtant endeavour to promote the welfare of our miſſions, that, without all doubt, it will much contribute to their future eſtabliſhment; for I hope, that your protection, becoming thereby more effectual and ſolid, will more advance our affairs, than all the pains and care which I can poſſibly take for their ſucceſs.

Purſuant to the firſt project that we laid, we were all of us to ſtay at Pekin, in the palace, and ſervice of the emperor; but providence otherwiſe ordered it, and they at laſt gave way to our inclination, which moved us to diſperſe ourſelves all over the provinces, for the propagating of religion. They were content to detain father Gerbillon and father Bouvet at court, where they immediately applied themſelves to the ſtudy of languages with ſuch ſucceſs, that they were quickly in a condition to aſſiſt the chriſtians, yea, and to be employed by the emperor in ſeveral important affairs. The moſt conſiderable was the peace between the Muſcovites and Chineſe; the treaty of which was then a-foot 300 leagues from Pekin, whither father Gerbillon was ſent with prince Soſan who was nominated plenipotentiary for the empire.

Nipchou was the place where the miniſters of the two nations aſſembled; each of them having a body of ſoldiers attending, to terminate, if occaſion ſerved, what the negotiation could not decide: the haughtineſs of both did oftentimes make them fly out into extremes; which would have proved fatal to both parties, if father Gerbillon by his diſcretion had not moderated animoſities. He continually paſſed from camp to camp, made ſpeeches, propoſed expedients, pacified their minds, and he diſſembled whatever might be apt mutually to exaſperate them in the concluſion: He ſo dexterouſly managed the common intereſts, that the peace was concluded to the ſatiſfaction both of Chineſe and Muſcovites. Prince Soſan was ſo well pleaſed with the zeal and wiſdom of this father, that he declared publickly, that, if it had not been for him, all had been in a deſperate condition; he expreſs'd himſelf about the matter to the emperor to the ſame effect, inſomuch that this prince had the curioſity to be acquainted with him. He found him to be a very ſenſible perſon, capable, ſincere, forward to execute, and even to anticipate his orders. This character wonderfully pleaſed the emperor; he had a mind to have him near his perſon, at the palace, in the campaign, and in his progreſs into Tartary, where he beſtowed upon him ſo many ſignal marks of his eſteem, that the grandees of his court might have perhaps conceived ſome jealouſy from them, had not the father's modeſty won him the affection of every body.

Theſe firſt favours were followed by an extraordinary one that was much better reliſhed by this miſſionary; he pitch'd upon him for his tutor in mathematicks and philoſophy conjointly with father Bovet, whoſe merit he likewiſe much eſteemed. The paſſion, this prince hath for ſciences, makes him very intent upon ſtudies every day in a manner two or three hours together, which he ſpares from his pleaſure: it is more than probable, that, by the inquiry into natural truth, providence will conduct him by degrees to the eternal fountain of truth, without which, all others ſerve not ſo much to perfect the mind, as to puff it up with pride in the eyes of men, and render it inexcuſable before God.

Father Verbieſt had already begun to explain theſe ſciences to him; but, beſides his making uſe of the Chineſe tongue in his lectures, which is not proper, by reaſon of its often repeated equivocals, to illuſtrate notions otherwiſe obſcure enough of themſelves: beſides that, I ſay father Verbieſt died. Theſe fathers ſuppoſed the Tartarian tongue would be better liked by this prince, and that it might ſerve their turn the better to make the notions intelligible. It happened according to their expectation, and the emperor became in a ſhort time ſo capable, that he compoſed a book of geometry. He afterwards gave it to the princes his ſons, and undertook to be their maſter in it; he called them together every day, explained to them the moſt difficult propoſitions of Euclid; yea, and this prince, having upon his ſhoulders the government of one of the moſt potent empires of the world, did not diſdain, with his rule and compaſs in his hand, to ſpend his time in the family in ſpeculations, which intereſt alone ſcarce makes delightful to private perſons.

Whilſt theſe two fathers by their credit made themſelves fit to be in a ſhort time the main ſupport of religion, father Fontancy, father Viſdelou, and myſelf, did endeavour not to be unſerviceable in the provinces. Father Fontaney went to Nankim, father Viſdelou took care of the churches of Xanſi, where I alſo remained ſome time with him; from whence afterwards I removed to Xenſi, the ancient place of father Faber's miſſion, the chriſtians of which place, notwithſtanding their having been deſerted theſe many years, do neverthelefs preſerve their firſt fervency, and are ſtill looked upon as the mould of that great flock, and model of other believers. We underſtood at that time, by our own proper experience, what was often told us, that *the harveſt truly was great*, and that *happy is that labourer whom the Maſter of the harveſt doth pleaſe to make uſe of to gather it in.* Every thing is matter of conſolation in this glorious employment; the faith of the new converts, the innocence of the ancient, the aptneſs of the children, the devotion and modeſty of women; but yet, one is more eſpecially affected by ſome eminent and exemplary converſions, to perceive the work of grace now and then wrought in the hearts of idolaters.

The truth is, theſe are in reſpect of us convincing proofs of that truth which we preach and declare: For indeed, by what ſecret charm could we be able to animate dead minds, and raiſe them (if I may preſume ſo to ſay) to reaſon, to God, to all the maxims of the moſt pure and refined morality; minds, that have been buried and immerſed from their very infancy in fleſh and blood? What force and power, what blandiſhment could be able in an inſtant to bring into captivity rebellious minds under the yoke of a religion ſo ſevere as ours is, if Jeſus Chriſt himſelf did not work miracles, and if the holy Spirit, by the inward and inviſible operation of grace, did not ſupply the defect of his miniſters?

This is that, moſt reverend father, which we experience every day with aſtoniſhing comfort, which doth eſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, and ſettle us unmovable in the ſame faith which God produceth in idolaters. I would to God I were able to relate to you particularly all that paſſes in China on this ſubject, where, in ſpite of all the ſtratagems of devils, God is ſo conſtantly and reſolutely glorified. Yet, not being able upon my departure to pick up the particular memorial of each church, I ſhall only content myſelf to tell you in part what I myſelf have obſerved in my miſſion, and after what manner I have made it my buſineſs to adorn it, according to the ideas and practice of the moſt grave and ancient primitive miſſionaries.

All my buſineſs was reduced to three principal points; the firſt was to cheriſh and keep up the piety of old believers by the preaching of the word of God, and above all, by particular exhortations; which is abundantly more profitable and edifying than any thing that is ſpoken in publick, where the diſcourſe is often not underſtood, either becauſe of the people's ſtupidity, or elſe by reaſon of the preacher's ill utterance and pronunciation. Theſe poor ſouls, whom ſimplicity and fervency make teachable, do oftentimes hear that with tears in their eyes, which they do not comprehend but by halves; but yet, they always improve and edify by what they underſtand perfectly. They are eſpecially moſt taken with compariſons, parables, and hiſtories; and albeit they are not acquainted nor accuſtomed to that vehement and ſometimes paſſionate action of our preachers, yet for all that, they are moved and wrought upon when they ſpeak to them with earneſtneſs and concern.

I no ſooner came to a private houſe to confeſs ſick perſons, or about other buſineſs, but preſently you ſhould have all the family, nay, and the chriſtians too of the neighbourhood flock together about me, and intreat me to ſpeak to them concerning God. I had made but an indifferent progreſs in underſtanding and pronouncing their tongue, eſpecially when I firſt began to preach, which nevertheleſs gave them no manner of offence; ſo far from it, that, if they could but never ſo little apprehend what I meant, they never were cloy'd with hearing me.

I have moreover taken notice, that they had always rather I ſhould preach myſelf, how barbarous ſoever my language might appear, than that I ſhould get them inſtructed, as I ſometimes did by the help of a Chineſe catechiſt, that had been formed ſome time before to exerciſes of this nature. But, my viſits not being ſo frequent as I could have wiſhed, I endeavoured to make them up by godly books, with which, by God's bleſſing, China is very well ſtored, there having been ſome miſſionaries ſufficiently zealous and able to compoſe books, and that very politely, upon all the points of religion.

They have very curious and compleat catechiſms, wherein the entire and compleat body of the doctrine of chriſtianity, the life, miracles, and death of our bleſſed Lord, the commandments of God and the church are clearly explained. There are likewiſe to be found particular expoſitions upon the goſpels, treatiſes upon moral and chriſtian duties, ſome ſolid controverſies adapted to every body's capacity, practices of piety for the different conditions of life, prayers and inſtructions for the uſe of the ſacraments, a body of divinity for the learned, for they have tranſlated ſome part of Tho. Aquinas, and laſt of all, St. Ignatius's exerciſes for thoſe that mind heavenly things. Inſomuch, that this ſpiritual ſeed of the evangelical word is ſcattered all over, and multiplied an hundred fold.

I could have wiſhed there might have been a tranſlation of the Miſſal, upon the account of ſaying maſs in Chineſe, together with an exact verſion of the holy ſcriptures. Conformable to the permiſſion obtained for that purpoſe, the Miſſal was finiſhed, and father Couplet preſented it ſome years ago to the pope: however, after having duly examined the matter, it was not thought convenient to make uſe of it, but they continued to ſay maſs in the Latin tongue, as in other places. As for the compleat verſion of the Bible, there are ſuch weighty reaſons why it ſhould not forthwith be publiſhed, that it would ſeem a raſh piece of impudence to do it; and ſo much the more, becauſe there is already expounded, in divers books, what is contained in the goſpel; yea, and even whatſoever is moſt inſtructive in the reſt of the holy ſcriptures.

The ſecond method, to increaſe the fervent zeal of chriſtians, was prayer: Beſides the time appointed for maſs, I aſſembled them twice a day to make publick prayers. They ſung in two choirs with ſuch marvellous devotion, that it made me wiſh that the European chriſtians might have been witneſſes of their piety; for their rude, and ſometimes ſcandalous deportments before our altars, will certainly be condemned at the great tribunal, by the modeſty of thoſe later chriſtians.

They do not underſtand either ſinging by notes or muſick as we do, yet have they tunes of their own compoſure no ways unpleaſant, which ſeems to me abundance more tolerable than what are uſed in ſeveral ſocieties in Europe: They had likewiſe ſeveral ſorts of inſtruments; concerts they ſeem to admire, and our villages in France would ſerve their turn well enough in that point.

The Chineſe are of that temper, that they had need of ſomething ſenſible to heighten their devotion; ſumptuous and magnificent ornaments, ſinging, pompous proceſſions, the noiſe of bells and inſtruments, and the ceremonies of the church, are very taking with them, and allure them to divine ſervice. I took extraordinary care in that matter, to procure for them all that the church out of her moſt wiſe conduct hath permitted to the ſervants of God; yet, always diſtinguiſhing that which ſuperſtition, if one have not a care of it, is wont, in proceſs of time, to put into the common people's head.

I apply'd myſelf more eſpecially to inſpire them with reſpect to our myſteries, they made their confeſſion uſually every fortnight, Their confeſſion was not only attended with tears (for the Chineſe are more ſubject to weeping than we) but alſo with ſevere penance in the evening in the veſtry.

The lively faith, they had for the adorable ſacrament, made them conſtant attenders on the altar; and, when I permitted them to receive it, they communicated with affections of veneration capable of inflaming not only ſuch who are but lukewarm, but almoſt chriſtians: you might ſee them proſtrate at ſeveral times, with their face on the ground lamenting, and commonly ſhedding abundance of tears. Such like poſtures, more frequent and ordinary amongſt Aſiaticks than Europeans, yet evermore edifying and ſubmiſſive, do exceedingly contribute to excite devotion in the ſoul, and to impreſs upon the mind that profound veneration which the majeſty of our myſteries deſerves at our hands.

This reſpect extended itſelf alſo to the images, reliques, to the medals, holy water, and in general, to whatſoever bears the character of our religion.

They bore, more than that, a particular veneration for the Virgin Mary, which perhaps had gone too far, if care had not been uſed to regulate it. They call her the Holy Mother (Chin-Mou) and do invoke her in all their ſtraits and exigencies. The experience, they have had of her protection, hath confirmed them in this warm devotion, and the benefits, they receive daily from her, perſuade them ſhe is acceptable to God.

The women are yet more animated with theſe ſentiments than the men. All their churches are dedicated to her under the title of Chin-Mou tam, that is to ſay, the temple of the Bleſſed Mother. There they meet together, for they never enter into the church of the men, as the men dare not preſume to ſet a foot into theirs. But the paſſionate love, that the chriſtians have for Jeſus Chriſt, makes them really devout, and walk worthy of the profeſſion they have embraced. They continually repeat theſe following words, *Jeſus the Maſter of heaven, who ſhed his blood for us* ; *Jeſus who died to ſave us.* Being it is the myſtery wherein we moſt carefully inſtruct them, ſo it is that they moſt ſtedfaſtly believe. Every one ſhall have their crucifixes in their chambers; and notwithſtanding the nakedneſs of our images did at firſt give ſome offence, yet have they in proceſs of time accuſtomed themſelves to them. We diſtribute them to the people with ſome precaution, for fear they may chance to fall into the hands of idolaters, who might, either through ignorance or malice, be apt to prophane them.

And this was the reaſon why, after maſs was ſaid, I commonly removed from the altar a large graven crucifix, the pagans do oftentimes come out of curioſity to ſee our churches; now they might have ſtole it away, or ſpoken of it irreverently and blaſphemouſly, which nevertheleſs was not brought to paſs by the paints of Chriſt's paſſion which I left with them.

Now as for chriſtians, we are far from concealing from them this ſacred myſtery of our redemption, or from diſſembling in the leaſt circumſtance of the ſame. What certain hereticks have writ, concerning it, is a foul calumny, which all the Chineſe books and cuts, therein engraven, have long ago diſproved and confuted.

The croſs is carried publickly in the ſtreets in proceſſion, planted on the tops of churches, and painted over the doors of the chriſtians houſes. I have no where obſerved the ceremony of the adoring of the croſs, performed every Good Friday publickly, practiſed with more adoration than in China; nay, I ſincerely proteſt, that I never aſſiſted thereat without being forced to mingle my tears with thoſe of the believers, who outdo themſelves in devotion and publick penance on that day eſpecially. Thoſe, who have accuſed their faith in this point, would themſelves

ſelves be aſhamed at the inſenſibleneſs of Europeans, had they aſſiſted at our ceremonies; for our part, we are overjoyed to ſee the Opprobrium of the croſs to triumph, as far as the utmoſt limits of the univerſe, over the moſt proud and haughty nation of the world.

The particular inſtruction of the Chineſe women is much more troubleſome than that of men; they are never viſited but in the time of their ſickneſs, neither do they ever come to viſit the miſſionaries; but they may be ſpoken with in their churches, or elſe one may cauſe them to meet every fortnight to ſay maſs, and adminiſter the ſacrament to them; they dare not come oftener for fear of ſcandal, the laws of the country do not ſo much as allow them that, becauſe the diſorders, that happen every time the Pagan women viſit the temples of the Bonzes, cauſe our aſſemblies to be ſuſpected, and afford a ſpecious pretence to the Gentiles to cry down religion.

Notwithſtanding a man cannot imagine what fruit may be reap'd by it, I came to this church upon Friday evening to hear confeſſions. 'Tis always in a place expos'd to every one's view; for in this caſe one cannot act with too much caution. On Saturday morning I finiſh'd the confeſſions of thoſe that were not able to get a place the day foregoing. Almoſt every one of them confeſs, and would be glad ſo to do every day if they had liberty granted. Whether it be tenderneſs of conſcience, or eſteem for the ſacrament, or ſome other reaſon beſt known to themſelves, I know not; but they think they can never ſet time enough apart to diſcover their faults. There is required abundance of patience to hear them; and, being naturally of a mild diſpoſition, they would take it very ill to be handled roughly; yet have they one good quality, that they are ſeldom teſty and froward. They receive the inſtructions from their director in all humility; they blindly pin their faith upon his ſleeve; we never inflict great penance on them, nay tho' it be a difficult matter to reduce them from their ordinary peccadilloes, yet do not they find it ſo hard to bewail and lament for them.

As for notorious ſins they very rarely commit them, becauſe their condition exempts them from the moſt dangerous opportunities; and, if they could be brought to keep peace in their domeſtick affairs, their life would be otherwiſe wonderful innocent. I have obſerved in many of them a certain devotion that wanted but little of holineſs. They always apply themſelves to buſineſs or to prayer, ſeeking all opportunities for the education of their children, or for their own improvement: very ſcrupulous and nice in the obſervation of the practice of every chriſtian duty; charitable, frequent in mortification; in a particular manner zealous for the converſion of idolaters; attentive to all occaſions that preſent themſelves to do acts of charity; inſomuch that I have heard the ancienteſt miſſionaries ſay, that, if China once turn'd chriſtian, almoſt all the women would be ſaved. This is not an affected encomium of the Chineſe women; I do faithfully and honeſtly relate what I have ſeen, and I judge of other churches by this whereof I have the care and conduct.

The inſtruction of the youth of riper years gave me as much trouble. I was perſuaded that this age, above all other, requir'd cultivating, eſpecially in China, where many things concur to make them have an averſion for the ſervice of God; their eaſy ſoft temper, the complaiſance of all about them; their relations that doat upon them, and ſeldom carry a ſtrict hand over them, but let them have their wills; the company of heathen children always corrupted and vicious very ſoon; their dependance, their complaiſance with ſchool-maſters, who many times have ſuch influence on them, as to inſpire them with an averſion for religion. All theſe are obſtacles to their inſtruction, very hard to ſurmount what care ſoever we take.

Yet was I willing to diſcharge my duty by ſeveral ways and means: that, which appeared to me the moſt effectual, was to take a chriſtian ſchool-maſter into my houſe, who was an able zealous man; the children came thither to learn, and I took the opportunity to inſtill devotion into them, to expound to them the principal articles of religion, to train them up, and diſcipline them againſt the aſſaults of the Gentiles, to accuſtom them to the ceremonies of the church, where they aſſiſted at maſs every day. This practice did alſo produce another good effect: the children of idolaters who came to ſtudy under the tuition of the ſame maſter, whither by reaſon of cheapneſs, or becauſe of the nearneſs of the place, heard, whether they would or no, what was taught to their ſchool-fellows; theſe inſtructions form'd and ſeaſon'd them by little and little to chriſtianity, and repleniſh'd their mind with abundance of good notions and ideas, which, as ſo many ſeeds, in proceſs of time, did produce evangelical fruit, that is to ſay, real converſions.

It were to be wiſh'd there were a good number of chriſtian ſchool-maſters that might teach gratis in cities, that would be the beſt means to propagate religion, and to preſerve good manners, and keep up decorum in families; but the miſſionaries are ſo far from being in a condition to maintain them, that they are hard put to it to ſubſiſt themſelves; for they do not lead ſuch a life as ſome ill-informed, or rather ill-affected authors would have made the world believe they did. Nay, and I ſpeak even of thoſe who are at court, who ſeem by their outſide to live in the affluence of all accommodations. It is true, indeed, they go in their ſilks (according to the mode of the country) when they go to viſit perſons of quality; yea, and they are ſometimes carried in a ſedan, or elſe on horſeback, attended by ſervants; all which is neceſſary to keep up their credit, and preſerve the protection of the Mandarines, for want of which the chriſtians would be often oppreſſed; but yet that makes the miſſionaries to lead an hard life, for theſe expences conſuming their whole revenue, or penſion, which never amounts to an hundred crowns per Annum, the ſmall portion that remains is ſcarce ſufficient to live on. The miſſionary is very decently (not to ſay very poorly) habited in his houſe, his lodging is very inconvenient, he lies upon the hard ground, or upon a very thin quilt without ſheets: As for his table, it is ſo frugal, that there is never a monk in Europe to whom the canon preſcribes ſuch a rigorous abſtinence; ſome of them paſs whole years together with only rice, leguminous vegetables, and water; for the Thee, that is uſually drank, is neither pleaſant to the palate of a Chineſe nor a foreigner.

However, I ſpeak only of the time that they are in their houſe; for as ſoon as ever they come abroad to travel about the provinces, and to ſeek the loſt ſheep in the villages, mountains, and the moſt remote places, one is not able to expreſs the continual fatigues of their miſſion; (I ſpeak chiefly of thoſe that perform in the weſtern provinces; for the channels, that water almoſt all the provinces of the ſouth, make theſe perambulations leſs tedious.) Then it is that they labour night and day, lie in barns, eat with the poor countrymen, and are expoſed to the ſcorching ſun, and the moſt vehement cold, oftentimes covered all over with ſnow, and wet to the ſkin with rain; and then we meet with nothing to comfort us at our arrival but fervent chriſtians, that quite weary us out by the exerciſe of our miniſtry that they expect from us.

The province of Xenſi, that fell to my care, is one of the largeſt in all China. I had ſome chriſtian churches eſtabliſhed within an hundred leagues of one another, whither I muſt go by roads ſo toilſome, that even horſes are of no uſe. They have mules bred in the mountains, and managed for this ſort of journies, that is to ſay, for the eaſieſt ways; as for the other ways you are forced to foot it, whether you creep on all four up the rocks, or deſcend into the precipices. You croſs over the valley in water and dirt, expoſed to tygers, but yet more to robbers, whoſe retreat the country does favour.

They are not like thoſe fine ways and delightful pleaſant champagne provinces of the ſouth, which art and nature have ſeem'd rather to have made for the delight of the inhabitants, than for the convenience of travellers. The vallies of the Alps and Pyrenees are much more paſſable; and one may properly ſay of China, that, where it is fine, nothing in the world is finer; and, when it ceaſes to be ſo, nothing is more horrid and frightful. Nevertheleſs, ſince the death of father Fabor, one takes delight to travel along thoſe tedious roads that he watered formerly with the ſweat of his brows, where he hath ſhed abroad that ſweet ſavour of holineſs that ſtill upholds the faith of chriſtians, and animates the zeal of the miſſionaries.

The other churches of this province are more eaſily come at. I ſpent a great part of the year in travelling from village to village, catechizing, preaching,and adminiſtring the ſacraments to believers that aſſembled upon my paſſage in all the places that I appointed. I divided my time between them and the idolaters, whoſe converſion always proves more frequent in theſe ſolitary remote places than in great cities, or in the metropolis of a province. Some of them there were, who being already convinced of the truth by reading, or by their commerce with chriſtians, came of their own accord to receive baptiſm : Others ſhaken, and rouzed either by their relations or friends, came to hear diſputations, and at laſt ſurrendered themſelves to the grace of Jeſus Chriſt: Many allured by novelty, or by the intreaty of their neighbours, heard attentively, and always diſputed with a great deal of heat ; amongſt whom, ſome there were that withdrew from the diſputation more hardened than ever ; yet others, more faithful to the drawings of the Spirit, gave glory to God, and humbly acknowledged their errors. All my trouble in this ſort of controverſies was, that I could not deliver myſelf as I would. The difficulty of explaining myſelf in a foreign language deprived the truth of its weight and power. I thought, if I could but have ſpoken my native tongue, there ſhould not have been one idolater in my auditory, that ſhould not have opened his eyes to truth firſt, and then to faith. But beſides that, men commonly ſpeak enough of it to make every man inexcuſable, as St. Paul ſaith ; yet I made moreover this reflection, That he that plants, and he that waters, what pains ſoever he may take, and how expert ſoever he may be in planting and watering well, yet does but very little by that. A man ought to refer this great work of converting ſouls to God ; 'tis he alone that cauſes theſe plants to increaſe, that nouriſhes them, and raiſes them up to himſelf, according to the order of his infinite mercy and eternal purpoſes. And at theſe ſet times fixed and ordained in the eternal counſels of divine predeſtination, how many times have I ſeen a few words, ill pronounced, ſenſibly to triumph over error, becauſe the Holy Spirit, that maſter within the elect, doth unfold the ſenſe of them ; whereas, prolix diſcourſes have had none other effect, but only to harden the heart ; when, by a juſt judgment, God was not pleaſed to accompany them with an extraordinary evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit.

You will, without doubt, moſt reverend father, be exceeding glad to underſtand the nature of the main difficulties we meet withal in the converſion of the Gentiles. I have obſerved three ſorts of them that ſeem peculiar to the Chineſe. Perſons of quality, and thoſe who would be thought wiſe, objected chiefly againſt the myſteries: their hearts roſe chiefly againſt the Trinity and Incarnation; a God that was penetrable, a God that could die, was no leſs in reſpect of them, than of the Jews, a ſtumbling block and a piece of folly. The exiſtence of God, eternal, ſupreme, infinitely juſt, infinitely powerful, went eaſily down with them, and the convincing proofs of it, that I urged to them, made them ſometimes forbear entering into the liſts with me thereupon.

To proceed in order, and to follow the roads which prudence and holy fathers have chalked out for us on theſe occaſions, I divided our religion into two parts. In the firſt, I propoſed to them whatſoever reaſon exempt from paſſion dictates to us. That there is a God; that this God, being infinitely holy, enjoins us to love virtue, and ſhun vice, to obey princes, to reſpect our relations, to do no wrong to one's neighbour; that good men, that are oftentimes miſerable in this world, enjoy a certain reward in the next; that, on the contrary, wicked men, who ſpend their life in inordinate pleaſures, are rigorouſly puniſhed after death; that this ſame hope and fear, that are the beginning of wiſdom, are likewiſe the firſt rule of our demeanour; but yet, that the inflamed love, that every man ought to have for this ſupreme arbitrator of life and death, is capable alone to render us perfect.

After I had convinced them by theſe maxims, I bid them practiſe, with this ſpirit of love and fear, theſe divine leſſons; proſtrate yourſelves every day before the infinite majeſty of this God that you acknowledge; in this poſture, with tears in your eyes, and an heart broken and contrite with grief, for knowing him ſo late, beg of him from the bottom of your heart; that he would pleaſe to raiſe you to theſe ſublime truths, which reaſon doth not diſcover to you, but which it hath pleaſed him to reveal to the world by his beloved Son, which at preſent make up the particular character of the chriſtian faith.

It was not always ſuch an eaſy matter to obtain what I demanded; the moſt part of the Gentiles, accuſtomed blindly to purſue their paſſions, found more difficulty to embrace this novel kind of life, than to believe the moſt abſtruſe myſteries. Yet I can aſſure you, reverend father, that, of all thoſe that ſubmitted thereto in earneſt, I ſaw not any that was not a few days after diſpoſed to believe the moſt difficult things which the new teſtament teacheth us; ſo true it is, that faith is the gift of God, that cannot be acquired by all the force of reaſoning; and thoſe only obtain, who follow our Saviour's counſel: *Seek and ye ſhall find, knock and it ſhall be opened to you.* God indeed, to accompliſh this promiſe, did concur pretty often to the converſion in a moſt miraculous manner; and I obſerved in ſeveral new converts ſo many enlightenings, juſt upon their reſolving to live well, and be conſtant in prayer, that the Holy Spirit muſt needs have illuminated them.

A gentleman, whom reading and diſputing had made to waver in his opinion, could not yet reſolve to believe; yet, he determined notwithſtanding to practiſe the morality of Jeſus Chriſt, ſuppoſing, that a good life would much conduce to diſpel theſe miſts. At the firſt, his doubts got ground of him inſtead of being vanquiſhed; the more he looked upon the croſs, the more did his ſpirit revolt. He compared the fables of his own religion with the ignominious death of a God-man that lays the foundation of ours. They both ſeemed to him equally ridiculous ; and, take what care he could to ſearch, nothing could he find that confirmed him more in chriſtianity than in idolatry. His relations, and divers of his friends and acquaintance, uſed their utmoſt endeavours to win him over to Jeſus Chriſt, but all to no purpoſe ; and he was juſt upon the point of taking up his old courſe again, when our bleſſed Lord ſtopped him upon the very brink of the precipice.

One night (as I had it from his own mouth) he ſaw in his dream heaven open ; Jeſus Chriſt appeared to him full of majeſty, ſitting at the right hand of the Father, and ſurrounded with an infinite company of bleſſed ſpirits ; on one hand, he ſhewed him thoſe eternal rewards that are promiſed to chriſtians ; on the other, he diſcover'd to him profound abyſſes, which the torments and ſhrieks of a great many idolaters made gaſtly and frightful. *That is thy portion*, ſaith he, with a threatening countenance, *if thou doſt not follow me.* Oh! ſon, continued he with a more mild countenance, *Muſt my croſs diſcourage you ? And muſt a death, which is the ſource of my glory, make you aſhamed ?*

This viſion frightened him, and he awakened quite another man ; he did not look upon it as a dream, he did not buſy himſelf to find out what extraordinary thing chance and an over-heated imagination were capable oftentimes to produce during ſleep : the poor man being perſuaded, that God had ſpoken to him, demanded to be baptiſed with a great deal of importunity ; nay, and he was ſo far from having any trouble to ſubmit to the belief of our myſteries, that he proteſted he would willingly part with his life to defend the truth of them.

Another, leſs knowing, but much more obſtinate, did not only not forſake his errors, but did even ſcoff at and deride our moſt holy myſteries, and was preſent at my inſtructions only to jeer them; yet had he permitted his wife to turn chriſtian, becauſe he was not willing, by croſſing her deſire, to breed a diſturbance in his family: but ſaid, he would have a great care of following her example, for fear the world ſhould be apt to believe that all his family was run mad.

Being naturally of a more ſpritely temper and briſker than your Chineſe uſually are, I endeavoured to win by fair means more than by diſputation; at length, perceiving neither of them prove effectual, I went one evening to his houſe to ſee him, and taking him aſide: I depart to-morrow, ſir, ſaid I, and am come to take my leave of you. I muſt needs confeſs, it is not without ſome ſorrow, not only becauſe I leave you, but more eſpecially becauſe I leave you in your errors. At leaſt, before my departure, do me one ſmall kindneſs; your wife is a chriſtian, ſhe hath an image of the God-man, whoſe religion I preach, do ſo much as proſtrate yourſelf ſometimes before this ſame image, and beſeech him whom it repreſents, to illuminate your mind, if it be true, that he hath power ſo to do, and if he be capable of hearing you. He promiſed me he would do it, and preſently after my back was turned he performed his promiſe.

His wife, ignorant of what had paſſed, ſeeing him upon his knees, adoring Jeſus Chriſt by often bowing his head before this image, ſuppoſed he was converted, and ſent one of her relations into a houſe adjoining where I was, to acquaint me with it: I ran thither, and found him ſtill ſo taken up in this action, and in prayer, that I had not a mind to interrupt him.

As ſoon as he roſe from his knees, I told him, I could not ſufficiently ſignify my joy to him, occaſioned by the wonderful change God had lately wrought in him.

How! ſaith he, all amazed, did you ſee at ſuch a diſtance what paſſed in my mind, or hath God revealed it to you? Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, replied I, lets me underſtand ſo much, for he acquaints us, that thoſe who aſk any thing of his Father in his name ſhall be heard. Oh! father, cried he, it is true, I am no longer the ſame man, I perceive myſelf a chriſtian without yet knowing what chriſtianity means; but pray inſtruct me, I am ready to ſubmit, and to receive baptiſm this very moment if you pleaſe.

I told him, I baptiſed nobody before I had firſt inſtructed them; that, being obliged to depart, I would nominate a chriſtian to whom he might have recourſe in my abſence. He conſented to every thing, and we proſtrated ourſelves before this miraculous image, to return thanks to the Divine Majeſty, who can, when he ſees good, from the hardeſt ſtones raiſe up children unto Abraham.

Amongſt ſeveral other effects of that grace, wherewith it hath pleaſed God to bleſs my miſſion, the converſion of an old officer in the army ſeems worth the relating to you. From a private centinal, he was got up to be the king's lieutenant in one of the cities of the third order, and, notwithſtanding he was very rich, yet had he never a concubine; his wife, being a chriſtian, obliged him to live in a more regular manner than other Mandarines. But nothing could determine him to turn chriſtian; not that he was bigotted to paganiſm, his deſire of advancing himſelf in the world took up all his thoughts, and he had till that time never owned any deity but his fortune. This indifferency for all ſorts of religion is of all conditions the moſt dangerous; and

I have found by experience, that a man is never at a greater diſtance from the true God, than when he acknowledges none at all.

Yet had he a great value for chriſtians, becauſe he edified by their innocent life. When I chanced to go to his city, he always made me a viſit; and, becauſe he thought it pleaſed me, he went ſometimes into the church to lie proſtrate before the altars. I thereupon took occaſion to lay the buſineſs of his ſalvation home to him, but he heard the moſt ſerious things that I ſpoke to him thereupon with a ſmile.

One day, ſpeaking to him of hell in a more terrifying manner than uſual: You muſt not be ſurpriſed at my undauntedneſs, ſays he, it would be a great ſhame for an old officer as I am, to be afraid. Ever ſince I turned ſoldier I took up the reſolution to fear nothing; but after all, ſaith he, what reaſon can I have to fear? I do nobody wrong, I ſerve my friends, and am faithful to the emperor, and, if heretofore I have been ſubject to the uſual diſorders of youth, I am at preſent temperate enough in my pleaſures. That is as much as to ſay, reply'd I, that you ſtrive to gratify the world, but you are no wiſe ſollicitous to render to God what you owe to him; could you imagine you ſhould be a good officer, in diſcharging the particular duty of your calling, if you refus'd at the ſame time to obey and acknowledge the emperor.

'Tis not enough to be regular in all the actions of a private life; the principal duty of a ſubject is to ſubmit to his ſovereign, and the whole duty of a man is to own and fear God. You are in the right ſaith he, I do ſeriouſly think it. You think ſo in vain, reply'd I, if that God, which I ſpeak to you of, does not give good thoughts. Beg of him this evening to enlighten your underſtanding, he will hear your voice; but do you remember alſo to liſten to his, and follow it.

Altho' I could hope no more from this diſcourſe, than from ſeveral other preceding ones, yet I obſerved he was wrought upon: I mentioned ſome ſuch thing to his wife, who took an occaſion thereupon to ſpeak home to him; and one of his officers, being very zealous and well inſtructed, deſired him at leaſt to aſſiſt at evening prayer to be performed in his houſe. His preſence ſtirred up the fervency of his domeſticks, and they all begged of Jeſus Chriſt, that he might be converted, with cries and tears, which the infinite goodneſs of the Almighty can ſcarce ever withſtand.

From this very moment he began to waver, and the various thoughts he revolved in his mind a great part of the night, concerning the danger wherein he was, made him take up a reſolution to go thro' with religion. But our Lord inſtructed him concerning it immediately; for, he ſeriouſly proteſted, that being a little ſleepy, he had ſuch horrible repreſentations of hell, that he was no longer in ſuſpence whether or no he ſhould reſolve: Upon his awakening, he found himſelf a chriſtian, or, at leaſt he took up a firm reſolution ſo to be as ſoon as poſſible he could. He forthwith repaired to the church where I ſaid maſs; when it was finiſhed, I was ſurpriſed to ſee him at my feet begging baptiſm of me, with his eyes bathed in tears: weeping, I ſay, for ſcarce could he utter his mind, ſo much did his ſighs and tears interrupt his diſcourſe: He ſpoke likewiſe with a much more confident air, and there was obſerved, in his action, I know not what ſort of fear that had ſeized him, of which he was not maſter. Whether it was that his imagination was ſtill ſmitten with the repreſentation of hell, or whether God by this change was pleaſed to make us, as well as him, apprehenſive that all the bravery and haughtineſs, that war is capable of inſpiring, is not proof againſt that ſaving horror which he darts (when it pleaſes him) into the moſt undaunted hearts.

I

I had a great mind, according to my cuſtom, to take ſome time to examine and inſtruct him, but he proteſted that he would not go out of the church till he was baptiſed: *Perhaps I ſhall die this very night*, ſaid he to me, *and you would be grieved to know me eternally damned.* His reſolution not to forſake me, the intreaty of chriſtians, that went down to the ground to me to obtain this favour, and I know not what internal motion prevailed upon me. I examined him about every point of religion; he underſtood one part of it, and learned the reſt with ſo much eaſineſs, that two hours after I thought I could initiate him into our myſteries. His converſion made a great noiſe in the city, ſeveral idolaters followed his example; and, ſince in heaven itſelf there is rejoicing at the repentance of one ſinner, there is no queſtion but the ſaints and angels were joyful of the converſion of this very man.

This ſubmiſſion of our ſpirit to the obſcureſt myſteries, how difficult ſoever it may ſeem, yet is it not the thing that troubles the Gentiles moſt; ſeveral other conſiderations are greater rubs in their way. The firſt is the reſtitution of ill-gotten goods, which in reference to the merchants and Mandarines is an almoſt unſurmountable obſtacle.

Injuſtice and cozenage are ſo common in China, in theſe two conditions, that few of them there are who have enriched themſelves any other way. A merchant always puts off his wares at the deareſt rate he can poſſibly, and never utters his good merchandize but when he cannot get rid of his bad. Cunning and craft, ſo peculiar to this nation, ſeem to intitle it to the right of ſophiſticating all things. But the ſanctity of our religion doth not permit what human laws tolerate: a man, when he is become rich by unjuſt dealing, muſt come and make up his accounts with God, when he does in earneſt think he is come to the knowledge of him. I muſt confeſs, that I never inſiſted upon this point but it made me tremble. This is for the moſt part a rock of offence to a Chineſe.

They do not boggle at the myſteries, nor ever call them in queſtion; and the reaſon is, becauſe they ſeem not cut out for ſpeculative ſciences. But as to the buſineſs of morality, they have a certain penetrating aptneſs, and think themſelves little inferior to us.

‘ It is very true, ſays a merchant to me one day, ‘ man is not allowed to defraud or do wrong to his ‘ neighbour; but it is not I that cheat when I ſell too ‘ dear, or when I put off my bad ſtuffs, the buyer ‘ abuſeth himſelf. As he for his part deſires to have ‘ them for nothing, or as little as he can, if I agree ‘ to it; ſo I likewiſe am in the right to exact large ‘ rates from him, and to receive them, if he be ſo ‘ ſimple as to give them me. This is the fruit of our ‘ induſtry, and this profit is no violence, but the ‘ effect of my calling, that teaches me to improve ‘ my trade.

‘ Moreover, adds he, altho’ it ſhould be true that ‘ I ſhould poſſeſs another man’s goods, and that I ‘ ſhould have committed a fault by enriching myſelf ‘ at his coſt, how can I have the conſcience at preſent ‘ to ſtrip my children naked and reduce them to beggary? Believe me, father, thoſe, from whom I have ‘ extorted what they had, have, I’ll warrant you, ‘ done as much to others, who again have enriched ‘ themſelves after the ſame manner. Here it is the ‘ cuſtom to deal thus, and every one in particular, ‘ (if they have any reaſon) ought mutually to pardon one another for theſe ſmall faults, otherwiſe ‘ we muſt undo and overthrow whole families, and ‘ introduce a diſorder worſe than the miſchief that ‘ one hath committed. As for my part, I freely ‘ pardon thoſe who have chowſed me, provided nobody will moleſt me about the pretended wrong I ‘ have done him.”

This is the language of the children of darkneſs, of whom Jeſus Chriſt ſaith, *That it is eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Let a man repreſent to them what he pleaſes, yet they always have their own way, being more obdurate than blind; for they ſeldom fail of admiring juſtice and an unbiaſs'd humour in others. See here an example of what I ſay, whereof I have been witneſs myſelf.

A young man travelling in the province of Xenſi, where I chanced to be, found a purſe upon the road, of about ten or twelve crowns; he had the honeſty to inquire after the perſon to whom it belonged, that he might reſtore it. This was look'd upon as an heroical action by the Chineſe; now the Mandarine of the place would not let him do it without a recompence; he made an encomium of it himſelf in a diſcourſe that was printed in a large character, and affixed upon the palace gate.

But God Almighty, to whom even natural virtues are acceptable, was infinitely more gracious to this young man; for, proceeding on his journey, a perſon unknown to him accoſted him, and ſaid, how came it to paſs that you reſtored the money ſo generouſly? Do not you know that it is none but the chriſtians duty to do ſuch things as theſe? And know, that, in the ſtate wherein you are, all your moral actions will not hinder you from being damned; believe me, you will do well to go to the father of the chriſtians, and embrace their religion, without which all your uprightneſs and natural equity will ſtand you in no ſtead after death.

He immediately obeyed, and return'd back to find me out; he related to me, with abundance of modeſt ſimplicity, what had happen'd to him, and ever and anon he would be ſaying, What is it to be a chriſtian? And what would you have me do? I inſtructed him with ſo much the more eaſineſs, becauſe he took nothing amiſs: in a word, he was endued with ſo much innocence and candor, that I was much taken with him; ſo that when I found him well diſpoſed, I proceeded to the baptiſing of him, and put him in a way to ſanctify his good inclinations for the future.

The devil, who underſtands the blind ſide of the Chineſe as to matter of intereſt, hath inſpired the idolaters with a maxim that always retains them in their errors. The people fancy that one is chriſtian enough if he be poor, and that chriſtianity was the religion of beggarly fellows; ſo that if there happen any misfortune in a family, if there chance to be a chriſtian in it, all others preſently lay the blame upon him, and load him with their imprecations. One cannot, without a ſtrong faith, reſiſt this perſecution, and when one propoſes to an idolater, prepoſſeſs'd with this falſe idea, to embrace the chriſtian religion, inward grace muſt be exceeding ſtrong to oblige him to ſacrifice his fortune, and to forſake, as he imagines, all his temporal intereſts.

This very reaſon ſways almoſt with all the Mandarines, who venture all as ſoon as they think of becoming chriſtians. Father Adam's fall, that drew along with it ſo many illuſtrious families in the late perſecution, makes their hair ſtill ſtand an end. They know that the religion of the Europeans is not approved of by the laws, and withal, that they may deprive all ſuch as embrace it of their lives and fortunes. What protection ſoever the emperor may grant to the miſſionaries, he may hereafter revoke it, he may die; and the parliament watch all opportunities imaginable to root out chriſtianity; ſo that the fear of loſing the deceitful riches of this world deprives a multitude of people of eternal bleſſings, which they cannot ſufficiently value, nor know the worth of.

But now if a Mandarine, who has any work of grace upon his heart, wave all theſe conſiderations, yet upon his converſion he meets with another notable obſtacle to his perſeverance, ſtill more difficult to ſurmount than the former; ſince the penſions of the officers are not capable to ſupply the uſual expences of their family, they have no other fund for to maintain it beſides injuſtice.

The miniſters of ſtate, and chief preſidents of ſovereign courts of judicature of Pekin, do underhand exact conſiderable ſums from the viceroys; and theſe latter, to make it good, have recourſe to the principal Mandarines of the province, who again lay a tax upon the ſubaltern officers: none dare preſume to diſpenſe with it, without running into the danger of being quite undone; inſomuch that every one of them, that he may maintain his poſt, gapes after getting money by hook or by crook.

This miniſtry of injuſtice, which the ambition of the grandees, and avarice of ſome of inferior rank, have introduced into the empire ſince the laſt revolution, gives a mortal blow to the eſtabliſhment of our moſt holy faith upon a ſolid foundation, becauſe a chriſtian Mandarine ceaſes to be a good chriſtian, if he fleeces and robs, or elſe he ceaſes to be a Mandarine if he do not cheat.

However, we meet with a great many of them, whom providence preſerves, who have not bowed the knee to Baal. We have ſeen in China, as in the primitive church, ſome examples of this chriſtian generoſity, that count the goods of this world as nothing, in hopes that the kingdom of heaven will one day be their inheritance. During the time of the perſecution there paſt an hundred things of this nature, that might afford matter of edification; but, being I ſet down nothing but what I have ſeen, I ſhall content myſelf to relate a more recent example which likewiſe much affected me.

A fervent chriſtian, of the province of Xenſi, after he had enriched himſelf in divers honourable employs, did at laſt retire from the world, reſolving to lay out one part of his eſtate in the ſervice of God, and to diſpoſe of the other in leading a peaceable and innocent life with his family. He had built a church in the country, whither I ſometimes went to adminiſter the ſacraments, and baptiſe the catechiſts, whom he took ſpecial care to train up himſelf; but, his houſe ſtanding in a place that was a great thoroughfare, the troops, that are continually going and coming in China, laid all his grounds waſte, not daring to do the leaſt damage to thoſe of his neighbour idolaters; and this is the reaſon that induced them to deal with him at this rate.

The Chineſe are wont publickly to belch out curſes againſt thoſe that do them wrong, eſpecially, if they cannot be revenged of them other ways. If a man hath been robb'd in his houſe, and one cannot diſcover the robber, every morning and evening, for ſeveral days together, the family's buſineſs is to curſe him; the father, mother, children, and the ſervants take it by turns, and relieve one another in this exerciſe, and wiſh him all miſchief imaginable; they have (if I may ſo expreſs it) Formula's of foul language, and dire expreſſions, which they repeat an hundred times, bawling as loud as poſſibly they are able, at the gate, or upon the houſe-top; and they imagine that the robber will come to ſome harm by them, wherever he be, 'till ſuch time as he hath made amends for the wrong.

Notwithſtanding, there is not one of an hundred of theſe robbers, that give any heed to this tedious noiſe; yet, ſome there be that are frighted at it, and this fear prevents abundance of violence. Chriſtians, who love their enemies, and wiſh well to thoſe that do ill by them, are far from curſing them; ſo that the ſoldiers that I told you of, fearing the curſes of the Gentiles, ſpared their goods; and, fearing nothing from the wrath of this zealous chriſtian, they plundered his houſe, ſtole his fruit, cut down his corn, and pluck'd up his trees; ſo you ſee his extraordinary patience drew upon him all the damage which otherwiſe would have equally fallen upon others.

His friends, more concern'd at his loſſes than himſelf, often laugh'd at his inſenſibleneſs, and reproach'd him pretty much in the ſame manner as Job's friends did him on a ſuch like occaſion, telling him, that all his bleſſing of God would not ſecure him from loſing his eſtate, and probably not from ſtarving; *Benedic Deo & morere*, Bleſs God and die.

They were always telling him, that it was a ſtrange thing, that, for the bare obſervance of his religion, he would ſee himſelf reduc'd to the utmoſt extremity. If ſo be, ſay they, you are afraid yourſelf to utter curſes againſt thoſe rogues, ſend one of your ſervants to do it for you, or elſe let out your eſtate to Gentiles, who will not be troubled with theſe ridiculous ſcruples.

This good man abounding in a lively faith, and that godly ſimplicity ſo conformable to the goſpel, made anſwer, That all he had was at God's diſpoſal, that he would preſerve it; and that, upon the whole, he had rather receive hurt than do any. He told me one day, my children take it very ill, that I leave my houſe and goods, at ſixes and ſevens, to be plunder'd at this rate. You know I have my particular reaſons to do thus, but they have none at all complain, ſince the goods do not belong to them; they have wherewithal to live, without being beholding to any body, upon what I have reſerved for myſelf; but altho' they ſhould be in want, yet I had rather, when I come to die, leave examples of virtue for their portion, that contribute to the ſaving of their ſouls, than riches, that may make them loſe them.

Theſe ſentiments, moſt reverend father, were ſuch matter of joy, that I am not able to expreſs it to you. I ſaid ſometimes to myſelf, in the exceſs of my joy, *Is there more faith than that in Iſrael?* No, O Lord, I have loſt nothing by leaving France, ſince I find ſome ſaints here; *thy Spirit hath indeed filled all the earth*, and that profound ſcience of ſalvation, that we in Europe have enjoy'd for ſo many ages, begins at length to be ſpread abroad to the extremities of the world, by the ſtupendous efficacy of thy holy word.

Nevertheleſs, becauſe his children were very urgent with me, to find out ſome way or other to remedy this diſorder, and that indeed it was convenient to prevent the Gentiles malice from prevailing over the Chriſtians patience; I permitted them, on ſuch occaſions as theſe, to make uſe of threatenings inſtead of curſings; and to tell them, I wiſh you no harm; yea, and I forgive that you have done me; but God, who pleads my cauſe, knows how to puniſh, tho' I do not pretend to do it; the time will come, when you ſhall be ſmitten with all the anathema's that your unjuſt violence deſerves, and that curſe, he ſends on you at preſent, will be to you the ſource of all the miſeries which his law forbids me to wiſh to you: this expedient took effect, and the chriſtians, growing eloquent for their own intereſt, did ſo lively repreſent the judgment of God, that the idolaters durſt no longer blame them.

The ſecond obſtacle in my way, in converting the Chineſe, proceeded from the multitude of wives which the laws of that country permit them; that is, in reſpect of the perſons of quality only, who, beſides their own wives, take as many concubines as they are able to maintain; for, as to the ordinary ſort, they have not wealth enough to allow this expence. The Mandarines are by their condition debarr'd from all other divertiſements, they are permitted only to eat now and then with their friends, and give them a play; gaming, taking the air, hunting, private viſits, publick aſſemblies would be look'd upon in them as crimes of ſtate; ſo that they ſeek no further than their houſe to find wherewithal to ſupply the want of thoſe pleaſures which the laws abridge them of.

Here and there one of them applies himſelf to ſtudy, as the ſureſt means to advance him; but the greateſt part of the Mandarines compoſe a kind of ſeraglio, wherein they ſpend all the time that they can ſteal from their affairs. One may judge by that, how little they are inclined to deprive themſelves of delights, to be ſatisfied with one wife, whoſe age, nay, and many times antipathy, have but already too much diſguſted them.

It is true, thoſe, who are converted, are permitted to take one of their concubines to wife, in caſe the lawful ſpouſe hath not a mind to turn chriſtian; but the laws prohibit them to do ſo: and in China, one cannot divorce his wife, except in ſome very few particular caſes authorized by cuſtom: moreover, the relations of her, whom her husband ſhould have thus repudiated, would certainly be revenged on him, nay, and would force him by law to take her again; ſo that, when we propoſe to the Mandarines the other difficulties of our religion, they diſpute, they conſider how to conquer them; they do not deſpair to do violence upon their inclinations; but this laſt point diſcourages them at firſt daſh, and deprives them of all thoughts of being converted. I will give you a notable example of what I ſay.

I was going one day from one village to another, in pretty bad weather, and, making haſte to get there in time, I heard an horſeman behind, who gallop'd up to me; he was a man of between fifty and threeſcore, well mounted, and attended by ſome ſervants: as ſoon as he had overtaken me, he told me, that the great eſteem, he had for the chriſtian religion, gave him ſome thoughts of getting himſelf fully inſtructed therein, and that nothing could ever be able to divert him from this reſolution, becauſe he perceived in his mind a wonderful deſire to embrace it. This ardency, ſaith I, ſir, without all doubt comes from God; fleſh and blood do not inſpire ſuch like ſentiments into you; for my part, I am ready to aſſiſt you; I hope, on your part, you will be perſuaded to follow the voice that calls you. We were afoot in the middle of a great highway, and, taking him aſide a little, I began to inſtruct him: every thing appeared rational to him; and, after having run over all the myſteries that are moſt difficult, I adviſed him to follow me into the church, whither it was my duty to go, when I call'd to mind that I had forgot the material point; I ſuppoſe, ſir, added I, that you have no concubines, or, at leaſt, you are reſolved to ſend them packing; for, without doubt, you are not ignorant, that it is not allowed chriſtians to marry ſeveral wives. The religion which I preach, and Jeſus Chriſt taught, applies itſelf principally to wean our hearts from ſenſual pleaſures, nay, and doth even ſometimes exhort us, to deprive ourſelves of thoſe which reaſon permits.

How! ſaith he, ſtartled at this, am I oblig'd (if I have any thoughts of being a chriſtian) to turn off my concubines? Ah! what hurt is there in keeping them? What will people ſay of me in the world? What will become of my children? And what will become of myſelf? But, is that really an article which cannot be diſpenſed with? I endeavour'd to pacify him, and make him apprehend that he labour'd under a miſtake, if, to overcome the difficulties of his converſion, he relied wholly upon his own natural ſtrength, and preſent inclination: God, ſaid I, who knows our corrupt nature, hath ſecret methods whereby to aſſiſt us, that we do not at firſt ſo much as dream of; endeavour only to keep alive that good will he hath granted you, he will accompliſh the reſt, you will find yourſelf changed in reſpect of this, as of all other things.

He liſtened to me a good while without ſpeaking a word, but at length taking his leave of me on the ſudden, and making a low bow, he mounts briſkly on horſe-back, puts ſpurs to his horſe, and rides full ſpeed towards the place from whence he came; I quickly loſt ſight of him, but methought I ſtill ſaw him, ſo lively was his countenance for ſome time imprinted upon my ſpirit; and I am ſtill quite diſconſolate for loſing a ſoul in an inſtant, which the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt had been ſo long preparing for me.

But now, in reſpect of womens converſion, it is much more difficult. A concubine, for example, acknowledged the verity of religion, and the miſerableneſs of her ſtate and condition; ſhe had a great deſire to come out of it, and receive baptiſm; it was told her, that the firſt ſtep that faith acquir'd of her, was to live ſeparately from her pretended husband, and to forſake her ſins, ſo far ſhe conſents; nay, ſhe deſires it with all her heart; but to obſerve what ſhe repreſents to herſelf: I belong to a Mandarine who bought me, if I go out of his doors he hath a right to claim me, and take me again, and inflict puniſhment upon me as his ſlave. If by good fortune I avoid his purſuit, whither can I retire to be in more ſecurity? My kindred, who ſold me, dare not harbour me, and I ſhall infallibly fall into the hands of another perſon, who will engage me in the ſtate that I ſeek to avoid; I muſt therefore remain in the houſe where I am; but how ſhall I be able to reſiſt a brutiſh fellow, who only conſults his paſſion, juſtified by the laws and example of the whole empire? It is to no purpoſe to lay before him the holineſs of chriſtianity that I deſire to embrace; my intreaties, tears, yea, my reſiſtance, and all the efforts that I, poor I, can make, are not able to hinder him; nevertheleſs, I am reſolved to run away whatever it coſts me; order me to do ſomething, but pray do not refuſe me baptiſm.

It ſo falls out ſometimes, that an idolater, taking diſtaſte at ſome extravagant caprichio of his chriſtian wife, does wrongfully accuſe her, and obtains leave, by the force of money, to ſell her to another; yea, ſometimes without any legal proceſs of juſtice, he ſells her, and retires into another province; this woman gets into the hands of another man; how can ſhe avoid ſin, receive the ſacraments, and perſevere in the faith? In truth, the miſſionaries are at their wit's end, having at that time no other courſe to take, but to go to prayer, that God, who ſincerely deſires the ſalvation of all men, would pleaſe to make uſe of thoſe ſecret means, that his almighty power is wont to produce, when his ordinary providence, and the efforts of our good deſires, prove ineffectual.

We have, moſt reverend father, ſo much the more reaſon to hope for theſe diſtinguiſhing favours from God in ſuch like occaſions, becauſe he often grants them, even then when we do not judge them abſolutely neceſſary. It is true, miracles are not ſo common in China, as the ſtate of that empire would ſeem to require: The emperor, to whom we have related thoſe which God hath been pleaſed to work in other nations, does ſometimes reprove us for it. Are we, ſaith he, in a worſe condition than the Barbarians, that have ſo frequently ſeen their ſick healed, and their dead raiſed to life? What have we done to God, that he renders our converſion ſo difficult? You come from the utmoſt ends of the earth, to preach up a new law to us, contrary to nature, elevated above reaſon: Is it juſt, that we ſhould take your word for it? Do ſome miracles that may warrant the truth of your religion, and I'll paſs my word for the ſincerity of our faith.

We have frequently told him, that God was the maſter and giver of theſe gifts, and that he diſtributed them according to the decrees of his eternal wiſdom; that it is out of our ſphere to fathom their depth; that ſometimes he did not work theſe prodigies in kings courts, becauſe he foreſaw the ill uſe they were likely to make of them; ſometimes becauſe giving them better parts and abilities, and more penetration than to others, theſe ordinary graces were ſufficient for them; whereas the ſimple vulgar, and the rude, unciviliz'd nations, ſtood in need of the ſenſible marks of his almightineſs, for the more eaſy diſcovering of the truth; yea, and it is more than probable alſo, that carnal prudence, which is at ſuch enmity with the Spirit of the bleſſed Jeſus, the ſoftneſs, ambition, and luxury of great perſons draw upon them this terrible chaſtiſement, and that God in his juſt judgment refuſeth miracles to perſons who do themſelves refuſe to ſubmit to the moſt plain and ordinary laws of nature.

But, my lord (have ſome replied) the charity of that great number of miſſionaries, who joyfully forſake Europe, where their quality, eſtates, and their ſcience ought naturally to detain them; who traverſe a thouſand dangers, to come hither to ſacrifice themſelves to the happineſs of your people; and with ſo unbiaſſed and conſtant zeal, ſir: Is not there ſomething of a prodigy in it? And ſhould it not be as powerful to perſuade you as miracles? If they be ſuch knowing, learned men as your majeſty allows them to be, how do they abuſe themſelves? And if they be wiſe, as you ſeem to think them, why do they abandon all the pleaſures of this world, to come ſo far to deceive others, and all to no purpoſe? After all the reflections they have made this hundred years upon the different religions of China, there is not one of them, who hath not judg'd them all wholly contrary to reaſon; but, during ſo many ages that we have examined the chriſtian religion, we have not obſerved amongſt us one wiſe man, and of good morals, that hath ſuſpected it of falſhood. Theſe anſwers do uſually put him to a ſtand, and force him to make certain reflections that do not a little diſturb him.

In ſhort, moſt reverend father, if miracles be wanting at Pekin, the buſineſs is otherwiſe in the provinces, ſeveral are there wrought, and thoſe of father Faber are ſo generally known, that it is ſomewhat difficult not to believe them; not that I go about to juſtify all that is related of thoſe, nor of a great many more prodigies, which they relate on ſmall grounds: but, you'll give me leave not to doubt of thoſe whereof I myſelf have been witneſs; and peradventure, moſt reverend father, you rely ſo much upon my ſincerity, as to be inclined to believe them likewiſe upon my teſtimony.

In a village in the province of Xenſi, near the city of San-uyen, there lived an idolater, devout in his way, and extremely addicted to theſe ſuperſtitions: at the time of full moon, he burnt commonly, in honour of his gods, gilded, or ſilver'd papers, wrapp'd up in different figures, according to the cuſtom of the country. One day, preparing to offer this kind of ſacrifice before his gate, there aroſe a ſtorm that forc'd him to retire into his houſe, where he lighted the ſaid papers in the middle of a hall, without taking any farther care; but the wind, blowing open the gate, drove them up and down every where, and they had not time to prevent one part from flying into a ſtack of ſtraw, which ſet fire on the houſe.

People came running, but the conflagration became ſo furious, in a moment, that it was impoſſible to extinguiſh it. The houſe, on one ſide adjoining to the idolater's, belong'd to a chriſtian, and by this time ſeem'd (half encompaſſed with the flame driven furiouſly by the wind) to be in danger of being quickly quite conſumed. This poor man, attended with divers others, got upon the houſe-top, and did his endeavour, but all in vain, to defend himſelf from the conflagration; when his brother very confidently came as near the fire as he durſt poſſibly, and fell on his knees upon the tiles, and looking up to heaven, ſaid, *O Lord, forſake not thoſe that put their truſt in thee; all that thou haſt beſtowed upon us is here; if we loſe it, the whole family is reduced to the utmoſt extremity: preſerve it, O my God, and I promiſe before thee, that I will aſſemble all the chriſtians in the neighbourhood, and we will go to church together, to demonſtrate my acknowledgment of the ſame.* Thereupon, he looſed a ſmall relique from his chaplet, and threw it into the middle of the flames, that by this time cover'd part of the houſe.

This action, perform'd with ſuch a ſprightly air, did equally attract the attention of chriſtians and idolaters, who, mightily aſtoniſhed at their companion's confidence, expected the event of the buſineſs; when Heaven, all on a ſudden, declar'd itſelf in a moſt miraculous manner: the wind, blowing violently, forthwith ſlacken'd, and a contrary wind, ſtronger than that ariſing at the ſame time, drove the violent ſtreams of the flames to the oppoſite ſide, upon the houſe of a wicked falſe-hearted chriſtian, that had lately abjured: it was conſumed in a moment, becoming an example of divine vengeance, as the houſe, that Heaven preſerved, was an evident token of his protection.

I was at that time ſix miles from the village. 'Tis true, my urgent buſineſs hindered me from being myſelf upon the ſpot; but I ſent very credible perſons thither, to be inform'd about it. The pagans, firſt of all, bore witneſs to the truth; and, ſome while after, the chriſtians thereabouts, conducted by him who was lately heard in his prayer, appear'd in my church to fulfil his vow; where, with one accord, they eccho'd forth the praiſes of the great God, who alone is able to cauſe his voice to be heard by the moſt inſenſible creatures, to the confuſion of falſe gods, that are not themſelves capable to hear the voice of rational creatures.

Some months after, there happened a thing no leſs ſurpriſing, the conſequences whereof were very beneficial to religion: an idolater, of an indifferent fortune, felt himſelf aſſaulted with an unknown diſtemper; it was ſo catching, that his mother and wife ſhar'd in it likewiſe: two or three times a week he fell into fainting fits, which, at the beginning, look'd like ſwooning, and then turn'd again into cruel head-achs, pains in the ſtomach and bowels; ſometimes they found themſelves extremely agitated, as if they'd had a fever; they loſt the uſe of their reaſon, their eyes rolled in their heads, and men judged by ſeveral other unuſual poſtures, that the devil had a hand in the matter.

They were the more perſuaded to it, becauſe they often found their houſe all put out of order, the chairs, tables, and earthen veſſels overthrown, not knowing on whom to lay the fault. The phyſicians, whoſe intereſt it was to paſs judgment, that nature on the one hand, and the malice of the people of the family on the other, were the cauſe of theſe ſeveral actions, made uſe of all their medicines to cure them. The Bonzes, on the contrary, aſſured them, that the devil was the author of the miſchief, and demanded unreaſonable alms to ſtop its courſe. So that the good people, abuſed on every hand, had thrown away all their eſtate, in four years time, upon the covetouſneſs of theſe impoſtors, without finding any benefit: however, ſeeing the diſtemper afforded them ſome intervals, they ſought up and down in the cities thereabouts, for new remedies for their griefs.

One day, this idolater going for this purpoſe to the chief city, he found a chriſtian upon the road, to whom he told his condition, and how miſerably he was handled. No queſtion, ſaith the chriſtian, but it's the devil that torments you: but you well deſerve it; why do you ſerve ſo bad a maſter? We fear no ſuch thing, becauſe we acknowledge one God, whom the devils adore; yea, they tremble before his image; and the croſs only, that we wear about us, hinders him from coming near us. If you will accept of a picture of Jeſus Chriſt, and you and all your family will honour it, it will not be long before you ſee the effects of it: however it is ſoon tried, it ſhall coſt you nothing, and you may judge by that, that I have no other aim but your benefit.

The idolater conſented to it, and, hanging the holy image in the moſt honourable place of the houſe, he proſtrated himſelf before it with profound reſpect, and begged every day, morning and evening, of our Saviour, that he would vouchſafe to heal his body, and inlighten his mind. His mother and daughter followed his example; and, from that very moment, the demons abandoned the place, of which Jeſus Chriſt had taken poſſeſſion.

Theſe good people growing ſtronger and ſtronger in faith, as the evil ſpirit gave ground, began at laſt to think of being converted in good earneſt. They came to inquire for me at Sigan, the uſual place of my reſidence, and demanded baptiſm of me; they had already got themſelves inſtructed; they had moreover got all the prayers by heart that we teach the late catechumens: but, their diſtemper making a great noiſe in the country, I was willing every body ſhould be witneſſes of this converſion, and ſo went to the village myſelf, hoping this miracle might ſettle chriſtianity therein, upon a ſolid baſis.

Juſt upon my appearing, all the inhabitants followed me to the place where the image was ſtill hanging; then I begun to tell them, that they were not to queſtion the verity of our religion, God having himſelf ſpoken by a manifeſt miracle; but that I had cauſed them to aſſemble, to inſtruct and baptiſe them: For, in a word, what do you deſire more to be convinced of the weakneſs of your gods, and the power of our God? the demon laughs at you, ſo long as you oppoſe him with nothing but idols; but he is not able to hold it out againſt the image only of the chriſtians God. Do you imagine to eſcape this God after death, whoſe power hell owns, and whoſe juſtice it experiences every moment.

The multitude interrupted me by a thouſand ridiculous objections, which I eaſily anſwered; at laſt, ſomebody told me, that the devil had no hand in the malady in queſtion; that, how extraordinary ſoever it appeared, it might proceed from ſeveral natural cauſes: That is, ſaid I, the moſt rational thing you can ſay, but yet does no way extenuate the greatneſs of the miracles. Let the malady come from the devil, or from nature, I will not examine that; but it is certain at leaſt, that the cure comes from God, whoſe image this man hath worſhipped; and there is no leſs power requiſite to cure natural diſtempers, than to drive out evil ſpirits. This reaſon ſhould have made an equal impreſſion on all minds; but grace, that acted differently in the hearts, gave place in ſome to voluntary obdurateneſs, whilſt it triumphed over the obſtinacy of others. Twenty-five perſons at laſt *gave glory to God, who alone worketh great marvels*; *Qui facit mirabilia magna ſolus*; and were ſhortly after baptiſed.

Theſe hauntings and infeſtations of demons are very ordinary in China amongſt the idolaters; and it looks as if God permitted it ſo to be, to oblige them to have recourſe to him. Some time after this accident that I but juſt now related, a maid, juſt upon her marriage, was attacked with a complication of ſeveral diſeaſes, which the phyſicians knew not what to ſay to, and which the Chineſe are wont to aſcribe to the demons. Her mother perſuaded her to turn chriſtian, and he, that was to marry her, promiſed to build a church to the God of the chriſtians, in caſe baptiſm gave her any relief: as ſoon as ever this maid had taken this courſe, ſhe found herſelf not only relieved, but perfectly cured.

But her huſband was ſo far from following her example, that he miſuſed her ſeveral times for having obliged him to renounce his faith; for the Bonzes perſuaded him, that this ſickneſs was but a piece of artifice in his mother in-law; and this fancy alone put him into ſuch a fit of melancholy, that he was inſupportable to the whole family, but eſpecially to his wife, who, from that very inſtant, became an object of his averſion. It was in vain to repreſent to him his own miſtake, and the malice of the Bonzes, for he always proteſted, that, if ſhe would not take up her old religion again, he would lead her an ill life all her days.

God, to undeceive him, ſuffered the demon to torment his wife as before; ſo ſhe relapſed into her former convulſions: ſhe was more eſpecially ſcared at the ſight of a great company of ſpectres, that let her not have an hour's reſt. Thus toſſed up and down, abandon'd to her huſband's inhumanity, that beat her cruelly, ſhe in all appearance led a very uncomfortable life; yet, remaining immovable in her faith, God always upheld her, and temper'd and allay'd, by the inward ſweetneſs of his grace, the bitterneſs of theſe afflictions; he comforted her likewiſe by ſenſible viſitations, by his word, and by the unſpeakable cogitations that he from time to time infuſed into her ſoul: inſomuch, that this condition, that gained her the compaſſion of all that knew her, was to her a foretaſte of paradiſe. She expreſs'd herſelf muchwhat to this purpoſe to her mother, who related it to me with tears in her eyes; for her huſband could not endure that I ſhould ſee her.

At firſt, I gave little credit to this diſcourſe, yet at length I was apt to believe there was ſomething ſupernatural in it; for one day, coming to a city diſtant from the chief city, where I ſojourned, about threeſcore miles, there I found this good woman with a great company of chriſtians of the neighbouring towns, which ſhe had taken care to get together, being confident that I would come at the very minute that ſhe had fix'd in her mind, and it fell out accordingly. It much ſurpriſed me to ſee her there, for I had no deſign to come thither; and it was only by chance that ſomebody had, about five or ſix hours before, made me reſolve to come thither, ſo that nobody could give her notice of this my reſolution. I took her in private, to learn of her how ſhe came to know this; ſhe told me, that her daughter, after a violent aſſault of a demon, had been viſited by our bleſſed Lord; that, when this extaſy was over, ſhe adviſed her to acquaint the chriſtians, and bring them to this village, for without all peradventure I would come thither on ſuch a day: In fine, added ſhe, not being able to come thither myſelf, and ſeeing my ſins render me unworthy to partake of thoſe ſacred myſteries, pray deſire the father to offer up the holy ſacrifice of the maſs for me, and the converſion of my huſband. This poor mother, relating to me this ac-accident, wept bitterly for the preſent ſtate of her daughter; nevertheleſs, the accompliſhment of this prophecy comforted and built her up in her moſt holy faith. I cannot tell what happened ſince that time, for the neceſſity of my affairs obliged me to leave that province.

The extraordinary things that I have ſeen, the zeal of the chriſtians, and the inclination of idolaters to be converted, inſpired me with an affectionate zeal for their ſalvation, and I heartily wiſh to beſtow the remainder of my life upon the cultivating this precious portion of our Lord's inheritance: but ſome ſuperior reaſons, which I am bound to obey, ſnatch me from it ſore againſt my will; at this ſeparation, I was more ſenſible than ever of my loſs.

Theſe good people, ſo affectionate to their paſtors, were almoſt ready to offer violence to me; but, underſtanding that they could not detain me without oppoſing the will of God, they abandon'd themſelves to ſorrow, and gave ſuch abundant marks of their affection, that I myſelf never ſhed more real and bitter tears: they waited for me upon the highway in crowds, where they had ſpread tables from ſpace to ſpace, covered with all ſorts of fruits and confectionaries. It was ſometimes neceſſary to make a ſtop, not to eat, but to hear their complaints, and to comfort them, for leaving them *as ſheep without a ſhepherd.* They made me promiſe them to return as ſoon as poſſible, or to ſend them ſomebody in my place. Thus I took my leave of theſe fervent chriſtians, melted with their tears, but much more edified with their faith and the innocence of their lives.

God, who knows the violence I committed upon myſelf, comforted me by an eminent converſion he vouchſafed to work at the fartheſt limits and laſt village of this province. There is ſomething in it ſo ſignal that I cannot forbear relating it.

I departed from Sigan the metropolis of this province upon the eve of a conſiderable feſtival of our Lady, which I was naturally engaged to ſpend in that church, where the multitude, and devotion of believers invited me to ſay maſs that day, and to adminiſter the ſacraments to them, being the laſt time I was likely to do it; yea, and the publick edification did even ſeem to require it of me, every one in general deſired I would; and, I don't know how contrary to reaſon, I was very obſtinate and reſolute not to delay my journey a minute; but the truth is, I felt inwardly I know not what internal motion that would not give me leave to ſtay any longer; nay, more than that, in ſpite of the ſuperſtition of the Chineſe, who obſerve lucky and unlucky days to begin journies, I made my idolater guides to depart on a day mark'd in the kalendar for an unfortunate one. They were ſurpriſed at this precipitation; yea, and I myſelf, reflecting afterwards upon it, could not chooſe but condemn it, not underſtanding then by what ſpirit I was influenced and impulſed, but God let me preſently underſtand it. On the fourth day after my departure, I continued my journey, and I was juſt upon my arrival in the very fartheſt city of the province of Xenſi, when a man that rid poſt, paſſing juſt by me, fell to the ground, and by his fall was like to have turned me over on the other ſide: this accident ſtopped me a little, and afforded time to the traveller, who was got up again, to take a view of me.

Notwithſtanding the multitude of paſſengers was great, yet, my long beard and European mien made me preſently be known to be a miſſionary: I am very fortunate, ſays the man immediately, to meet with you; that accident, that happened to me, ſpares me the labour of a long journey, and will engage you to a good deed. My maſter, who lives not above half a league from hence, ordered me to ride poſt to Sigan, to engage you to come to him; he hath been indiſpoſed theſe ſeveral months, and we are apt to believe that he ſeriouſly thinks of being converted. I quickly left the highway to follow him, and we reached the houſe at one o' clock in the afternoon.

He was a doctor of high renown by his extraction and underſtanding, living formerly at Pekin, but baniſhed ſome years before into Xenſi, for I know not what bad buſineſs; the time of his baniſhment expired, and he was reſolved to return to court, as ſoon as his health ſhould permit him to take his journey, for he did not look upon his diſtemper to be dangerous: the fever had left him, and beſides a cough that troubled him now and then, and made him ſtill keep his bed, he perceived no conſiderable inconvenience.

His ſervant being juſt departed, when he ſaw me come into his houſe, he was ſeized with aſtoniſhment, as if God had tranſported me into his houſe in a moment: Is it poſſible, cries he, all in tears, that Heaven ſhould work wonders for ſuch a wretch as I am? God hath ſollicited me theſe many years to go to him, without receiving any thing from my hardneſs of heart; 'tis but a moment ſince I begged of him to come to me in the perſon of one of his miniſters, he not only hears me, but does even anticipate my deſires. This is ſomewhat beyond the power of nature, and this favour does the buſineſs of my change. You know by that, father, that this great God is concerned in my ſalvation, and that it is his pleaſure that you ſhould contribute ſomething to further it. Then proceeding, You ſee, ſaith he, my wife, children, and daughter, they have been all chriſtians a long time ago; and I can ſay, that God hath made uſe of me as an inſtrument to undeceive them of their errors. I have given them your books, I have explained the maxims and morality of it to them, for the ſanctity, which your religion inſpires, perſuaded me I ſhould have a well ordered family, as ſoon as it ſhould be a chriſtian family. I was not miſtaken, and my conſcience would not have given me the lye, had I followed their example; but I have a long time laboured to procure their welfare, and could never find in my heart to conſult my own: now it is high time to follow that way I have ſhewed to others. The court, whither I am going, is not a proper place for converſion; and I thought it was my duty, *whilſt it is called to day*, to ſeek God, for fear the hurry of the world, wherein I am going to engage, ſhould hinder me from finding him hereafter.

All his family, which came about us upon this, wept for joy; but that, which affected me moſt, was that fervency I ſaw expanded in the eyes, countenance, and in all the motions of the ſick perſon. I had taken no refreſhment, and it was near two of the clock, and I was deſirous to defer his baptiſm till after dinner; but I found it impoſſible to obtain any delay. I therefore began to examine him, and he was ready to anſwer to all the articles of religion, that I yielded at length to all his urgent intreaties. I baptiſed him, and he accompanied the whole action with ſuch ardent and lively meditations of love, humility, faith, and hope, that nothing in all my life did ever ſo much demonſtrate to me what the holy Spirit is able to do in a heart, when it alone pleaſes to take it to taſk, without the aſſiſtance of its miniſters. Some while after I left him alone full of conſolation, and retired to a chamber to take a little repoſe, of which I had extreme need.

But ſcarce had I been there half an hour, but I heard great cries in all the family. They called for me every where; and, running upon the noiſe to the ſick man's chamber, I found him expiring in the embraces of his wife and children. I endeavoured to put him in mind of the laſt thoughts of baptiſm; he ſtill repeated with a languiſhing note the names of Jeſus and Mary; but yet he received the extreme unction in a manner inſenſible, after which he calmly gave up the ghoſt. All thoſe that were preſent cried, O it was a miracle! and recollecting what had happened at my departure, upon the road, and in the houſe, they did no longer queſtion but that all that had been managed by an over-ruling providence, that had made uſe of all theſe ſecret methods, for to procure him a bleſſed exit.

At that time the Spirit of the Lord ſeized upon all hearts, nobody wept; the ſpiritual joy was ſo univerſal, that nothing was heard any where but bleſſings, praiſes, and thankſgivings, to that gracious God, that had but now wrought ſuch ſtupendious miracles in his ſervant. What is to be moſt admired is, that there was not obſerved in him that deformity that death commonly leaves behind it; but, on the contrary, I know not what air of ſweetneſs and devotion ſeemed diſplay'd over his countenance, and did ſufficiently intimate the bleſſed ſtate of his ſoul. He was laid in ſtate, according to the cuſtom of that country, where I found him the next day twenty hours after juſt as he was; his hands and arms beſides were as flexible as if he had been but in a ſlumber.

Thus God, by one of thoſe many profound ſecrets of his predeſtination, vouchſafes to enlighten a ſoul ſometimes in the midſt of the darkneſs of idolatry, and ſnatch it from the jaws of hell by a continual ſeries of miracles; whilſt millions of others, educated in the boſom of the church, are, by his juſt judgment, given over to a reprobate mind.

Theſe are, moſt reverend father, the moſt extraordinary things that have happened to me, during the ſmall time that I have had the care of the miſſion of Xenſi: If I mention not what paſſed in the other provinces of China, it is not becauſe God doth not work ſuch like miracles therein, but by reaſon I have no exact memorial of them, I was afraid, leſt, relating upon hear-ſay, I ſhould be deficient in ſome conſiderable circumſtances; and I had rather let them be ſet down in writing hereafter, by thoſe who are better informed than myſelf.

This I can add over and above, to give you a a more exact account of what good there hath been done in the empire. There are above two hundred churches or private chapels, dedicated to the true God, and governed by certain eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors; Pekin, Nankim, and Macao have each its particular biſhop, by the nomination of the moſt ſerene king of Portugal, who, by his zeal and liberalities, continues to uphold chriſtianity throughout all the Eaſt, which all his predeceſſors have there eſtabliſhed with ſo much glory.

The other provinces, when I departed, were under the juriſdiction of three apoſtolick vicars, * one whereof is an Italian of the order of St. Francis, † the two others are eccleſiaſticks, Frenchmen by nation, doctors of the Sorbonne, of ſingular worth; the miſſionaries, that labour under their order, are likewiſe of different nations. There are four eccleſiaſticks of the ſeminary of foreign miſſions of Paris, amongſt whom the abbot of Lionne is very eminent for his zeal and application to the ſtudy of languages; they reckon much about the ſame number of fathers of St. Dominic, twelve or fifteen Franciſcans, and three or four of the order of St. Auguſtin: all theſe monks are Spaniards, and come into China by Manille.

The jeſuits who founded this miſſion, and who by the extraordinary favours of his majeſty the king of Portugal, as well as of the emperor of China, have been in a capacity to make conſiderable ſettlements, do maintain a great number of miſſionaries there; there were about forty of them at the time of my departure. Since that time the fathers Grimaldi and Spinola ‖ brought ſeveral others thither. But what ſignify forty or threeſcore labourers in ſuch a vaſt field? May it pleaſe the Maſter of the harveſt to hear the voice of thoſe that labour therein, who, groaning under the burthen and heat of the day, beg relief: or, at leaſt, may he pleaſe to ſhed abroad abundantly upon us that firſt ſpirit of the goſpel, which, in one apoſtle alone, was ſufficient heretofore to convert the greateſt empires.

Not but that the preſent ſtate of the church doth afford matter of conſolation, to thoſe who are concern'd for the glory of Jeſus Chriſt. They labour with no ſmall ſucceſs; nay, there are but few miſſionaries, that do not baptiſe every year three or four

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* The reverend father *de Lioniſſa.*

† Monſ. *Maigrot* and monſieur *Pin.*

‖ Father *Spinola* died by the way.

hundred perſons; inſomuch, that in five or ſix years they reckon above fifty thouſand idolaters converted. Beſides that, they baptiſe every year four or five thouſand children in the ſtreets of Pekin, which they go to look for every morning from door to door, where we find them half periſh'd with cold and hunger; nay, ſometimes half eaten up by dogs. If they ſhould do no more good but this, the miſſionaries would think themſelves well enough rewarded for all the pains they take.

But that, which ought to animate us to cultivate this miſſion better than all others, is the hope one day to convert the emperor; the change of whoſe religion would infallibly be followed by the intire converſion of the whole nation; ſo that although we ſhould wait for this happy moment three or four ages, without any other profit than what we hope for, in time to come, we ſhould be too happy in preparing by our patience the way of the Lord in this new world, which perhaps will make better improvement of the faith, that our ſucceſſors ſhall bring to it, than Europe does at preſent of that our forefathers intruſted it withal.

In ſhort, altho' amongſt the chriſtians that are in China, we can reckon no more princes and miniſters of ſtate ſince the laſt perſecution of father Adam; yet, for all that, we baptiſe every year Mandarines, doctors, and other perſons of quality; yet it is true, that the common people make up the greateſt number: *Non multi potentes, non multi nobiles.* And it is no news to own, that the poor have always been the elect portion and precious inheritance of Jeſus Chriſt in the church.

The main body of chriſtians is in the province of Nankim, and more eſpecially in the territory of Chamhai; but the faith is more lively in the provinces of Quamtum, Pekin, Xenſi, and Xanſi. There are in proportion as many Tartarians as Chineſe chriſtians;

theſe are more docile, and much eaſier to be converted; yet in the time of temptation they have not half ſo much courage. The Tartars, on the contrary, being naturally of a brisk temper, do not eaſily ſtoop under the yoke of the goſpel; but thoſe, over whom grace hath once triumphed, are endued with a virtue that is proof againſt the soreſt perſecutions. As for women, which we ſee more rarely, altho' they be leſs inſtructed than the men, yet their innocence, their conſtant attendance at prayer, their blind ſubmiſſion to the precepts of faith, and the moſt harſh and ſevere practices of chriſtian piety, do in ſome meaſure ſupply their defect of knowledge, as to the particulars of our myſteries.

It were to be wiſh'd, that the beauty and ornament of our churches might anſwer the devout fervour of chriſtians: but, beſides that the Chineſe are no great architects, this novel chriſtianity, ſo frequently ſhaken by perſecutions, compoſed for the moſt part of the poorer ſort of people, only tolerated by the bye, and always forced to obſerve a great many punctilio's, and keep within bounds, hath not yet been in a condition to rear magnificent temples. Nevertheleſs it is matter of aſtoniſhment, that the miſſionaries, with ſuch a pitiful fund as theirs is, ſhould be able on this ſcore to do ſo much.

The church of Pekin is very well built; the frontiſpiece, the ſtones of which were laid by the miſſionaries themſelves, is very proportionable and pleaſing. Thoſe in Kiamcheu, Cham-hai, and Jocheu, that which the fathers have at Canton, and divers others are as fine as our ordinary churches of Europe; but the church of Hamcheu was ſo very pretty and neat, that one could not enough admire it: you could ſee nothing but gildings, paintings, and curious pictures, it was all over adorn'd with them; yea, and there was a great deal of ſymmetry and order in the whole. That delicate red and black varniſh, which the Chineſe are ſo expert at, to which they give a particular relief or emboſſment, by the flowers of gold and other figures wherewith they enrich it, did produce the fineſt effect in the world to compleat the whole.

But this goodly church, the product of chriſtians devotion, and of father Intorcetta's zeal, is lately reduc'd to aſhes by a dreadful conflagration, that conſum'd one quarter of the city; and, in all probability, we ſhall not be in a capacity a long time to perform any thing like it. Neverthleſs it will be our comfort to ſupport us after this loſs, if it ſhall pleaſe our bleſſed Lord to deſtroy, at the ſame time, that pack of idols which have overflow'd the whole empire; and that he will vouchſafe to raiſe himſelf living temples in the hearts of the new believers, where he may be worſhipped in ſpirit and truth; wherein, for want of ours, they may offer to him the ſacrifice of praiſe and thankſgiving.

I ſhall not entertain you, moſt reverend father, concerning the tranſactions of the Indies, where the revolution of a huge kingdom, the jealouſies of ſome Europeans, together with the continual thwartings of hereticks, have broken all the meaſures that chriſtian prudence oblig'd us to take for the cauſe of religion; ſo that the moſt part of the French miſſionaries have been hitherto more conſpicuous by their ſufferings, than by their converſion of idolaters.

Some of them, after having lingered out ſeveral years in the moſt darkſome priſons, ſcarce begin to ſee the light, and are not yet in a condition even to exerciſe their functions with any freedom. Others, driven from their ſettlements, wander up and down upon the moſt tempeſtuous oceans, carrying along with them the miſerable remainders of their ruin'd miſſions; and, that they may return to the remoteſt parts of the world, they commit themſelves a fourth time to the mercy of the waves and their enemies.

Several buried in ſhipwracks, or worn out with toils, have gloriouſly finiſh'd their courſe; and, tho' their companions live ſtill, it is only to conſume by little and little the ſacrifice of their lives, by the ill habit of body they have contracted by their firſt labours.

You ſee, moſt reverend father, what ſort of perſons they be I ſpeak of, you know their names, you underſtand their worth, and, ſince they were choſen from amongſt a great many other candidates for the Eaſt-Indies, you have been pleaſed always to honour them with a moſt particular affection: and, may I be bold to add, that you were not ſatisfied with only ſending of them, you follow'd yourſelf in ſome reſpect, and became the fellow, or rather the head of their apoſtleſhip, ſharing, like one of the moſt zealous miſſionaries, in the ſucceſs of their holy undertakings, zealouſly lending an helping-hand to their labours, delivering them from their chains by a powerful protection, or, at leaſt, lightening the weight by conſolatory letters, full of that lively hope that makes a man take delight in the moſt rigid perſecutions.

This courage, moſt reverend father, which you have inſpir'd into us, does not only alleviate our ſufferings, but alſo aſſures us, that the ruins of this grand edifice, that we have laid the firſt ſtone of to the glory of God, will one day ſerve for a baſis to another work, yet more conſiderable and ſolid than the firſt; ſo that neither the ſhipwrack of * three of our brethren buried in the ſea, nor the loſs of † three more, who ſacrificed their lives aboard the veſſel in relieving the ſick, nor yet the death of a great many more whom the fatigues of the miſſion have ſnatch'd from us in the Indies, nor the priſons of Pegu, Siam, Moluccas, Batavia, Rotterdam nor Middleburg, where pagans and hereticks have tried our patience

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* *Barnaby, Theonvil, Nivart.*

† *Rochette, le Blane Serlu, Daudy.*

by turns: all that, I ſay, does not blunt the edge of our courage, being fully perſuaded that Jeſus Chriſt hath made uſe of the croſs to propagate and eſtabliſh religion: ſo the miſſionaries croſs is always to be the foundation of their churches, and, as it were, the ſeed of new chriſtians.

In the mean time, theſe firſt labours have not been altogether in vain; we baptiſed at Boudychery above four hundred idolatrous children: the people of Coromandel have been relieved, as were thoſe of Ceylon, Pegu, and Bengala. They labour'd with no ſmall ſucceſs in divers provinces of the empire of the great Mogul, and, above all, in the miſſions of Madura. Such miſſions, as in them we ſee in our days the ages of the primitive church reviv'd; wherein believers, wretchedly poor and depriv'd of all the comforts of life, ſeem to live only by their faith, hope, and charity; wherein the miſſionaries, to comply with the cuſtoms of the country, and obtain the people's favour, ſpend their lives in foreſts and deſarts, half naked, ſcorched by the ſun-beams, and walk, for the moſt part, upon ſcalding hot ſands; where upon the ways, full of briers and thorns, they take no other ſuſtenance but a little rice, with ſome inſipid plants, and no other beverege, but yellow muddy water from the ditches and marſhes.

There it is, where a great number of our brethren have ſuffer'd, and do ſtill daily ſuffer impriſonments, chains, ſcourgings, and all the torments that hell is wont to ſuggeſt, to the enemies of our moſt holy faith. There father Brito, illuſtrious by his birth, as alſo by the particular eſteem wherewith his majeſty of Portugal honoured him, but yet more, much more by his rare virtues, had the honour to part with his life in the cauſe of Jeſus Chriſt, where his brethren, after his example, labour, by their fervency, to obtain the ſame favour from Heaven.

Perhaps, moſt reverend father, this portraiture will not pleaſe the men of this world, not being ready to beſtow upon ſufferings the juſt value they deſerve, *and to ſavour the things that are of God*; yet I know, that will not abate the zeal of our fathers living in France, who have ſo many years aſpir'd to toilſome and tedious employments.

The miſſions, in reſpect of them, have ſo many more allurements, as they appear to others more hideous and frightful: if they expected to find in the Indies only common croſſes, whereunto providence makes every kingdom ſubject, but wherewith Jeſus Chriſt hath in a ſpecial manner enrich'd chriſtianity, they would have been contented with their recluſe religious way of living; and, with the eminent virtues practiſed therein, they would never perhaps have had the leaſt thought of leaving their friends, relations, and country. But they ſeek, elſewhere, what we here want of the paſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, according to the apoſtle's counſel, and they are willing to fill up the whole extent, the breadth and depth of this divine law, which carries them out, with St. Paul, to become victims of the moſt pure charity, even ſo far as to be anathemiſed, that their brethren may be ſaved.

Yet theſe are thoſe apoſtles, moſt reverend father, whom envy ſometimes, in France, paints out to us in ſuch black colours, whom hereſy, evermore oppoſite to true zeal, ſo often accuſeth of ambition, avarice, impiety, and idolatry; they are too happy in being the butt, that all the ſhots of calumny level at, provided they have none for their enemies, but the enemies of the church and truth; and, without doubt, the war, that ſuch adverſaries declare againſt them, with ſo much heat and animoſity here in Europe, does no leſs juſtify them, than that which they themſelves declare againſt paganiſm in the Indies.

Nevertheleſs, what juſtice ſoever wiſe men may do them in this point, yet it is moſt true, that that does not ſuffice to juſtify them before God, before whom the very angels are impure; after all the efforts of our zeal, we muſt not only acknowledge in all humility, that we are unprofitable ſervants, but confeſs likewiſe, with thoughts full of horror, that it is in vain to win over all the nations upon the earth to Jeſus Chriſt, if in the mean time we be ſo ſluggiſh as to neglect our own ſalvation, and unfortunately loſe ourſelves. I am, with a profound reſpect,

Moſt Reverend Father,

Your moſt humble

and moſt obedient Servant,

L. J.

LETTER XIII.

To my Lord Cardinal de Janſon.

The Chriſtian Religion newly approved of by a publick Edict, throughout the whole Empire of China.

My Lord,

IT ſeems as if Heaven, ſenſible of the labours of our miſſionaries, who, for theſe ſeveral years, have, with the ſweat of their brows, watered China, had a mind, at length, to eſtabliſh this new church upon a ſolid foundation. Hitherto it hath been ſubject to abundance of revolutions, flouriſhing under the reign of ſome emperors, perſecuted in the time of their minority, and, in a manner, totally ruin'd during the inteſtine commotions; but always in a tottering condition, by reaſon of the rigour of the laws, that have permitted a right to deſtroy it, even to thoſe that have the moſt defended it.

For the ſovereign courts of China, declar'd enemies to all foreign worſhip, rather out of a ſpirit of policy, than any ſincere affection to the religion of the country, have frequently condemned the chriſtian doctrine, and puniſh'd thoſe who had the courage to embrace it. Several of them, for all that, hearkened to the voice of God, rather than to the voice of man; but the greateſt part, apprehending danger as to their fortune, were ſo far from purſuing the known truth, that they durſt not ſo much as get themſelves inſtructed therein.

It is a matter of an hundred years, that we have labour'd to remove this almoſt invincible obſtacle to the converſion of great perſons. The hour of the Lord was not yet come; he was pleaſed to exerciſe the patience of his chriſtians, to try the conſtancy of the miſſionaries, and thereby inhance the worth of them both. But now at laſt the happy day begins to dawn, and the emperor hath granted an intire liberty of conſcience to his ſubjects, by allowing in a publick edict the chriſtian faith throughout the whole extent of his empire. * *Thou haſt, O Lord, broken the chains that held thy holy religion captive, now can we offer ſacrifices, and call publickly upon thy name; we preſent to thee our vows, not in ſecret as formerly, but in preſence of all the people, in the temples they ſuffer us to rear to thy glory, who are about to change the old* Babylon *into the new* Jeruſalem. Here I do preſent you, my lord, with the occaſion, and the whole continued ſeries of this happy event.

Father Alcala a Spaniſh Dominican, one of the moſt zealous miſſionaries in China, had purchaſed an houſe at Lanki, a little village of the province of

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* Pſal. cxix.

Chekiam, notwithſtanding this ſettlement was expreſsly againſt the edict of 1669; the Mandarine of the place, who at firſt did not oppoſe it, being afterwards nettled at ſome indiſcreet words, that eſcaped unawares from ſome of this father's menial ſervants, was reſolv'd not to diſſemble the matter any longer, but to proceed according to the courſe of law againſt him.

He therefore asked the miſſionary, how he durſt preſume to ſettle in the city? Why he preach'd up a foreign doctrine? And moreover, by what right he pretended to remain in the empire? This father foreſaw the ſtorm gather, and had prepar'd himſelf before-hand: 'I wonder, my lord, ſays he, in anſwer to the Mandarine, that you reckon that criminal in me at preſent, that you did not diſapprove at the beginning. You know that for ſome years the emperor hath kept and preſerv'd in the empire five of my European brethren (he meant us) that he hath not only ſent for them to court, but alſo hath by a publick edict granted them power to ſettle in whatſoever place of the kingdom they ſhall think fit: it is for one of them that I have bought this houſe, and I lodge in it till ſuch times as he come himſelf to take poſſeſſion of it.

'Moreover, you cannot be ignorant that the miſſionaries had liberty granted them to come again into their churches, when the emperor did them the favour to recal them from their baniſhment. Conſult, I pray, conſult your regiſters upon the buſineſs, and there you will find my name.'

Some months after another Mandarine, ſolicited by him of Lanki, or at leaſt urg'd to it by his example, was reſolv'd to put a ſtop to the progreſs of our holy doctrine; he prohibited the exerciſe thereof through the whole extent of his government, by an order, which he cauſed to be affixed in divers places. They treated religion in ſuch a deſpiteful manner, that father Intorcetta of our ſociety, and miſſionary in the metropolis of this province, thought himſelf oblig'd not to diſſemble the affront without betraying his miniſterial function.

He ſuppoſed likewiſe, that he had a right on his ſide formally to accuſe this ſworn enemy of the goſpel, whoſe behaviour was ſo excentrical from the emperor's intentions; for this prince had blotted out with his own hand a great many lines of a book that ranked the chriſtian doctrine in the number of dangerous and popular hereſies: this book was of moment, not only by reaſon of its author, eminent for his quality and deſert, but much more, for that it was compoſed for the people's inſtruction, by whom it was to be read, according to the cuſtom, ſeveral times a year.

Father Intorcetta did therefore judge it a piece of boldneſs, that made the Mandarine liable to the laſh, to condemn, by his private authority, that which the emperor ſeemed to allow of and approve, ſo that the father writ a very ſmart pithy letter to the governor of the capital city, in which he deſir'd him to cauſe this ſubaltern officer to retract his words, and ſo get this injurious writing to be torn in pieces: he likewiſe added, that, to repair this fault, he could wiſh that the Mandarine might affix other papers in the place of thoſe, more favourable to the religion, and more conformable to the emperor's intentions.

The governor diſpatched this letter to the Mandarine, and, as ill luck would have it, it was deliver'd to him upon a day that he heard cauſes, in ſight of all the people, at the very time that he was buſy in paſſing judgment. He ſo much reſented this affront, that contrary to the cuſtom of the Chineſe, and maugre his natural phlegm, he ſtarted from the bench tranſported with choler, complained of the impudence of the miſſionary, and proteſted openly, that he would be reveng'd.

That he might carry on the buſineſs more ſucceſfully, he aſſociated himſelf with the Mandarine of Lanki, and combin'd with him, if poſſible, utterly to deſtroy the chriſtian religion. Their firſt attempt was to aſſault the Dominican friar, on whom they thought more eaſily to accompliſh their deſign; for they could not imagine, that he was of the number of the ancient miſſionaries. To be rightly inform'd of the matter, they cauſed to be produced certain authentick copies of every procedure during the whole courſe of the perſecution againſt father Fii (for ſo was he called) with a deſign to confront him with himſelf.

It is a peculiar trick, pretty common in China, with the Mandarines, to queſtion the criminals not only about matters of fact, but alſo concerning abundance of inſignificant circumſtances, cauſing all they anſwer carefully to be taken in writing. Then, when they have talked a pretty while of a matter quite foreign to the ſubject in hand, to diſtract their mind, all on a ſudden they return to the thing in queſtion; they begin over and over the declaration; they change the order of the interrogatives, and cunningly interpoſe anſwers contrary to thoſe the guilty perſon made, on purpoſe to make him contradict himſelf, the more eaſily to ſift out the truth.

Father Alcala, without all doubt, would have been put to his trumps, if he had not, by a particular providence, preſerv'd a copy of theſe ancient proceedings. Wherefore, knowing the intent and deſign of his judges, he ſo well inform'd himſelf of all that had heretofore paſt to this purpoſe, and deliver'd himſelf ſo pertinently, and conformably to the firſt interrogatory, that his enemies were never able to prevail over him, as to his anſwers.

So that all the ſtorm fell upon father Intorcetta again, againſt whom they were much more animated and incenſed; but, foraſmuch as this father did not live within their juriſdiction, they ſuborned many conſiderable Mandarines, and the viceroy in particular, who added to his abſolute power in the province a greater averſion for the chriſtian religion.

They all unanimouſly reſolv'd to beat down chriſtianity, and after having cauſed all the proceedings, formerly made againſt miſſionaries, to be ſought out in the archives of the intendant of the city government, they found at laſt the decree of 1669, that ſtrictly prohibited them to build any churches; to teach in publick or in private the European law, to adminiſter baptiſm to the Chineſe, to diſtribute medals, chaplets, crucifixes, or other ſuch like tokens of religion, to chriſtians.

The miſſionaries were not ignorant of theſe prohibitions; but their particular zeal, and the example of Pekin, where the goſpel was preach'd under the emperor's very noſe, no body pretending to ſay any thing againſt it, put them upon waving the uſual rules of human prudence. Theſe very conſiderations made moſt part of the Mandarines to connive, and, whenever any one of them took upon him to impede the progreſs of the faith, they endeavour'd to pacify him by preſents, and letters of recommendation procur'd for us by the fathers of Pekin; or elſe, if need required, we made uſe of the emperor's authority againſt him.

The chriſtians of Hamcheu, under the cure of father Intorcetta, were none of the leaſt zealous. Their courage had appear'd under the government of divers Mandarines, great ſticklers againſt our moſt holy faith; but their courage was never more apparent than in the preſent occaſion; for the viceroy ſuppoſing, that he was impower'd to undertake any thing by vertue of the decree aforemention'd, cauſed to be affix'd to the gate of our houſe, in all the publick places of the capital city, and afterwards in above ſeventy cities of his government, a new ſentence, by which he forbad under grievous penalties, to exerciſe the chriſtian religion, charging all thoſe that embraced it to forſake it *.

Moreover, being informed, that father Intorcetta was formerly in the province of Kiamſi, and that he had not obtained leave from the court to ſettle in that of Chekiam, he ſent to ask him by what authority he durſt preſume to ſtay there; yea, and he commanded him forthwith to avoid the country; the officer, that brought this order, added, I command you withal, in the name of the viceroy, to burn all the books of your religion, together with the tables of printing, that you have in your houſe. They are thin boards, upon which they have engraven all the leaves, from which they may take copies, according as occaſion ſerves.

The father, not at all ſurpriz'd, anſwer'd, That he was in the city by the authority of him who granted the privilege to the viceroy himſelf, to remain there: ‘ Have you forgot, added he, that the em‘ peror, paſſing this way three years ago, ſent two ‘ grandees of his court to my church, to offer pre‘ ſents, in his name, to the true God, with expreſs ‘ orders, to lie proſtrate before the altars? I went to ‘ render him my moſt humble thanks for his gracious ‘ favour; and, that I might give him further demon‘ ſtrations of my acknowledgment, I was willing to ‘ accompany him upon the canal at his departure, ‘ where he was with his whole court.

‘ This grand prince, who had formerly honoured ‘ me with more than ordinary demonſtrations of his ‘ benevolence, taking notice of my barge amongſt ‘ a great number of others, cauſed it to approach his ‘ own, and ſpoke to me ſuch obliging things, that, ‘ after all that, I could not ſuſpect I ſhould be expoſed ‘ to any ſtraits, or inſults from any one of his officers.

‘ But, ſince this example hath made no impreſſion ‘ upon the ſpirit of the viceroy, go tell him, That

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* This happened about the middle of *Auguſt*, *Ann.* 1691.

‘ the emperor, not being willing I ſhould accompany him any farther, ſent me back with theſe his laſt ‘ words to me, which are too advantageous to me to ‘ preſume to alter, add, or diminiſh any thing in ‘ them: Your years, ſays he to me, do not permit ‘ you to attend me any longer, you are no way in ‘ a condition to endure the fatigues of a journey; I ‘ order you to return to your church, and there to ‘ ſpend the remainder of your days. But, now, if ‘ the viceroy does not only diſturb this tranquillity by ‘ ordinances injurious to the God whom I adore, but ‘ forces me ſhamefully to quit this province, I leave ‘ him to judge, whether of us two does more openly ‘ and peremptorily contradict the emperor's will and ‘ pleaſure.

‘ As to what relates to the table, on which they ‘ have engraven the law and maxims of Jeſus Chriſt, ‘ God forbid I ſhould be ſo wicked as to commit ‘ it to the flames. However, the viceroy is the ‘ maſter, ſince I cannot reſiſt his violence; but tell ‘ him from me, that, before he reſolve upon that, he ‘ muſt begin with the burning of myſelf.

The viceroy, ſurpriz'd at the undauntedneſs of the miſſionary, durſt attempt nothing upon his perſon; but he referr'd the buſineſs to certain ſubaltern Mandarines, who received orders, to ſummon this father before their tribunals, and to perplex and trouble him upon all accounts, without allowing him a moment's reſpite. Father Intorcetta, who juſt then fell ſick, might have been diſpens'd with from appearing; but he was afraid to loſe theſe precious junctures of time, that providence had put into his hand, openly to confeſs the name of Jeſus Chriſt; and being reſolv'd not to recoil, or give ground during the combate, he got himſelf carried before judges; much oppreſs'd, by reaſon of the malady he labour'd under, and much more at the ſight of his deſolate church: but, beſides, he was ſo animated by the holy Spirit, wherewith martyrs are corroborated, that, of all the Mandarines that interrogated him, not one of them but admir'd the greatneſs of his courage.

So that, in deſpite of the vigorous orders of the viceroys, every one of them almoſt treated him with abundance of deference; even to that degree, that one of them cauſed an officer of juſtice to be ſoundly baſtinado'd in open court, for having been wanting in his reſpect to the father. Adding withal, that indictments do not render a man guilty; and that he muſt have been convicted, to deſerve to be treated as a malefactor.

Father Intorcetta, preſently foreſeeing that the perſecution would be violent, had written to the miſſionaries at court, to the end that they might remedy it. The emperor was then in Tartary, where he divertiſed himſelf in hunting. Father Gerbillon, a Frenchman by nation, and one of thoſe the king ſent to China, accompanied this prince thither, by whom he was particularly beloved, retaining him almoſt always near his perſon; ſo that the letters were directed to him.

This father did not judge it convenient to ſpeak of it to the emperor, but contented himſelf to deſire a letter of recommendation from prince Soſan, one of the moſt powerful miniſters of the empire, and his particular friend, who immediately writ to the viceroy in a moſt effectual manner. He repreſented to him, that ſuch a procedure, as his was, ſmelled ſomewhat of violence, and was inconſiſtent with his wonted moderation and prudence. We live in a time, ſaith he, that requires much gentleneſs and diſcretion. The emperor ſeeks all occaſions to favour the doctors of the chriſtian law, how can you poſſibly think to pleaſe him in perſecuting that? Believe me, ſir, the example of a prince ought to make a greater impreſſion upon our ſpirits, than all the decrees of courts of judicature, and the ancient edicts, that the court itſelf can no longer follow, ought not at preſent to be the rule of its conduct. If you favour the miſſionaries, reckon that the emperor will take it kindly from you; and, if I may be permitted to ſubjoin any thing to this laſt motive, be aſſured alſo that I ſhall reſent all the good offices you render them upon my recommendation.

Prince Soſan is ſo conſiderable thro' the whole empire (whether it be by the honour he hath to be a near relation to the emperor, or whether by his place of grand-maſter of the palace, or whether by his credit or capacity) that upon any other occaſion the viceroy of Chekiam would have looked upon it as a great favour to receive one of his letters, and would not have balanced one moment to ſatisfy him; but paſſion had blinded him, and the vexation, to perceive himſelf leſs powerful at court than a ſtranger, inclined him to let the miſſionary underſtand, that he was at leaſt the maſter in his own province.

Wherefore, he began to ſeize upon ſeveral churches which he beſtowed upon the prieſts of the pagan gods, after he had violently taken away the ſacred monuments of our religion.

He iſſued out proclamations much more rigorous than the former, he threatened the father with his indignation if he did not abandon his flock, and he cauſed ſeveral chriſtians, that had but too openly declared themſelves, to be apprehended; ſome of them were haled to priſon, they ſeverely puniſhed others, and then the perſecution became bloody by the torments, that theſe generous confeſſors ſuffered for the name of Jeſus.

Amongſt thoſe that ſignaliſed themſelves, a phyſician more eminently made his faith appear; he was much grieved to ſee the altars of the true God violated and deſpoiled, croſſes broken in pieces, the holy images expoſed to the ſcorn, laughter, and impiety of idolaters: to repair this loſs, and that believers might not be left deſtitute of the ordinary marks of their religion, he diſtributed to each of them images and crucifixes. He went from door to door with the precious pledges of our ſalvation; animating the weak, and confirming the more courageous in their faith: *Do not fear*, ſaid he to them, *him who can only exerciſe his weak power on the body*; *but fear that great God*, *who*, *as he has deprived you of life*, *can alſo puniſh your ſoul with an eternal death*, *and rather ſuffer all ſorts of torments*, *than forſake his holy law.*

The Mandarine, offended at the boldneſs of the phyſician, commanded him to be loaden with chains; and, having cauſed him to be dragged before his tribunal, they prepared all things for his being cruelly baſtinado'd, when his godſon, who came running thither with other chriſtians, threw himſelf on his knees at the judge's feet, and begged of him with tears in his eyes, that he would permit him to receive the chaſtiſement of his godfather.

This zealous phyſician, who aſpired to nothing more than martyrdom, was ſo far from giving his place to another, that he conſtantly and ſtedfaſtly forbad it; and, at that time, there aroſe ſuch a ſcuffle between them, that the angels admired, and that made the chriſtian religion to be reſpected by the very idolaters. The judge ſtood amazed at it, and turning towards thoſe eminent confeſſors of Jeſus Chriſt, *Go your ways*, ſays he to them, *this forwardneſs to ſuffer the puniſhment of your faults deſerves ſome indulgence*; *I pardon you*, *but*, *henceforward*, *think of pleaſing the viceroy*, *and be more careful to obey the emperor's orders.*

When the Spirit of God hath once ſeized on the heart, mens words are not capable to touch them. This zealous phyſician, whom the ſight of execution had made more courageous, continued his acts of charity as before, and his zeal made ſuch a noiſe up and down, that the Mandarine durſt no longer mince the matter; he ſeemed much concerned at the contempt he uſed of his threatenings, inſomuch that he gave orders to his officers to bring him out, to make a ſevere example of him.

In effect, he cauſed him to be beat ſo cruelly in his preſence, that thoſe, who were preſent, were equally ſurpriſed at the ſeverity of the judge, and the patience of this good chriſtian. This bloody execution once over, ſome of his relations, who came running at this doleful ſpectacle, were thinking to carry him to his houſe, but he poſitively deſired to be carried to church; and what endeavours ſoever they uſed to divert him from it, yet he had ſtrength enough left to crawl thither himſelf, borne up by the arms of ſeveral chriſtians. He came thither all bathed in his gore; and, kneeling down at the foot of the altar, *O Lord*, ſaith he, *thou ſeeſt this day, that I prefer thy holy law to all the ſweetneſs of life: I come not to demand juſtice of thee for all the blood thy enemies have ſpilled, I come to offer thee that which remains of my own; I do not deſerve to die for ſuch a good cauſe; but thou, O my God, deſerveſt the intire ſacrifice of my life.* And then turning towards father Introcetta, who began to comfort him, *Ah! father*, anſwered he, *I ſhall be now at the height of my joy, if it were not my ſins, but my zeal that had brought this light chaſtiſement upon me.*

This example, and many others, that I forbear to relate, made ſuch impreſſions upon the idolaters hearts, that a great many of them reſolved to embrace the chriſtian faith, being perſuaded, that ſentiments, ſo oppoſite co corrupt nature, could not poſſibly proceed either from paſſion or error.

Among them, whom the holy Spirit did effectually touch, were three who appeared full of that very faith, that made in former times almoſt as many martyrs in the primitive church as believers; they were young, handſome, of quality, and what is more, engaged by their condition blindly to comply with the viceroy's inclinations. Nevertheleſs, counting their temporal eſtate as nothing, they demanded publick baptiſm.

The father, to bring the faith of theſe neophites to the teſt, hid nothing from them that might any wiſe ſtagger them; but it was all in vain to repreſent to them the rigour of the edicts, the viceroy's indignation, the deſolation they were like to caſt their families into, the danger of loſing their eſtates, honour, life, and all theſe conſiderations ſerved only to animate them the more; ſo that, after a pretty long trial, they were initiated into our ſacred myſteries, and took part as others did, in the croſs of Chriſt. Their converſion fortified the feeble-minded, and comforted father Intorcetta for all the evils that the perſecution had made his church to ſuffer.

But the viceroy was ſo much the more provoked, becauſe he had not the liberty at that time to ſhew his reſentment; for, juſt then, they delivered him two letters from prince Soſan; one of them was for father Intorcetta, the other, that was directed to himſelf, was full fraught for reproaches, for that he ſeemed to make no account of the prince's recommendation: *I could never have believed*, ſaith he to him, *that to pleaſe a company of ill affected people, who have exaſperated your ſpirit at the chriſtians, you would have deviated from the counſels I gave you. It is a friendſhip that I endeavoured to inſpire you with better ſentiments: think upon it once more, and reflect ſeriouſly with yourſelf, that it is I that ſpeak to you. I expect three things from your friendſhip; firſt, that you deliver the letter yourſelf to father Intorcetta, according to the ſuperſcription. The ſecond, that you do ſo well ſatisfy the father, that*

that he may have occaſion to bleſs himſelf for the kind offices you render him, and that he himſelf may teſtify the ſame to me. And the third is, that henceforward you do not any longer diſturb either the miſſionaries or chriſtians. In ſhort, I am extremely ſorry, for being obliged to write to you ſo often about this ſubject. If you for the future mend your manners, I ſhall write to you a third time to thank you; but, if your paſſion continues, this is the laſt letter you ſhall ever receive from me.

Then did the viceroy repent him of his former proceedings; yet, was he ſo far engaged, that he thought he could not handſomely go back with any honour. He found it eſpecially very hard to ſue to a miſſionary for his friendſhip, whom he but juſt now treated, and that publickly, with the utmoſt diſdain; but yet, dreading prince Soſan's reſentment, who was the moſt powerful and in moſt credit of all the miniſters of the empire: On one hand, he reſolved to ſtand to what he had done already againſt the chriſtians, without driving matters any farther; and on the other hand, to diſpatch one of his officers to Pekin, to purge and clear himſelf to the prince.

In this interim, father Intorcetta having a ſecret item of the letter that the viceroy had received, intimated to the fathers at court the ſmall effect they had produced; inſomuch that thoſe fathers reſolved to ſignify the ſame to the emperor, in caſe prince Soſan ſhould think it adviſeable. Wherefore they related to him what had paſſed at Hamcheu, the obſtinacy of the viceroy, the affliction of father Intorcetta, the danger wherein his church was, the ruin whereof would infallibly involve in it the utter ruin of all the miſſions in the empire. *Since all your endeavours, my lord*, added they, *ſeem ineffectual, there appears nothing that can put a ſtop to the violence of this obſtinate Mandarine, but the emperor's* *authority; but we ſhould be wanting to our true intereſts (and what ſways the more with us) to the acknowledgment we are bound to give for your favours, if we were ruled by any other conſiderations than yours.*

The prince, already provoked by the viceroy's behaviour, was not ſorry at this overture, and believed he had now found a fair opportunity to revenge himſelf; ſo that theſe fathers having recommended the importance of their affairs to God Almighty, wherein the ſolid eſtabliſhment, or utter ruin of religion was concerned, came to the palace on the 21ſt of December 1691, and demanded audience.

The emperor ſent ſome eunuchs, his confidents, to know what their buſineſs was: The fathers preſently declared to them, the heinous exceſs of the viceroy of Hamcheu, as well in reſpect of the miſſionaries, as in reſpect of the chriſtians under his government; they added moreover, that they had ſuffered a long time without complaining, in expectation that their patience would pacify his ſpirit; but ſince the miſchief became every day greater and greater, without all hopes of remedy, they came to proſtrate themſelves at the emperor's feet, as to the uſual aſylum of oppreſſed innocence, moſt humbly to beſeech him, to grant to their brethren in the provinces that happy peace they themſelves enjoy'd at Pekin, in the very ſight, and under the protection of his majeſty.

The emperor, to whom they reported this diſcourſe, had a mind to try the fathers conſtancy, and ſo returned them no favourable anſwer; but they, never ceaſing to repreſent the unhappineſs the indifference of this prince was ſhortly like to bring them under, he ſent new eunuchs to acquaint them, that he was amazed to ſee them ſo infatuated with the chriſtian religion: 'Is it poſſible, he bid them tell them, 'that you are always buſied about a world whither

‘ you are not yet come, and count that wherein you ‘ are at preſent, as nothing? Believe me, ſirs, there ‘ is a time for all things; make better improve‘ment of what Heaven inſtructs you with, and de‘fer all thoſe cares till you ceaſe to live; cares, ‘ that are profitable to none but the dead: For my ‘ part, ſaid he, in a drolling way, I do not concern ‘ myſelf in the buſineſs of the other world, and I do ‘ not pretend to determine upon the cauſe of theſe ‘ inviſible ſpirits.’

Then the fathers, oppreſſed with grief, ſhedding a torrent of tears, proſtrated themſelves to the very ground; they conjured the eunuchs to report to the emperor the ſad condition whereunto they were reduced: *This would be the firſt time*, ſaid they, *that this great prince abandoned innocent perſons, and appeared inſenſible of our lamentation: Is it becauſe we are unprofitable ſtrangers that he deals thus with us? At leaſt, gentlemen, pray tell him, that the great God of heaven and earth, whoſe cauſe we maintain, for whom we fight, nay, and to whom he himſelf is beholden for all his grandeur, well deſerves, that he ſhould exert all his power to make him known, and his juſtice in puniſhing thoſe who do him an injury in the perſon of his miniſters.*

In fine, after all theſe trials, this gracious prince, moved with compaſſion, could no longer diſſemble his real ſentiments; he therefore ſent to the fathers (that were ſtill proſtrate before his palace gate) an officer of his bed-chamber to acquaint them, ‘ That he ‘ did not allow of the viceroy of Hamcheu’s pro‘ceedings, and that he was willing, for their ſakes, to ‘ put an end to his unjuſt perſecution; and that, in ‘ a word, there were two ways to accompliſh it: ‘ The firſt, to ſend to the viceroy a ſecret order im‘mediately, to give ſatisfaction for miſchiefs paſt; ‘ that this way, tho’ not ſo exemplary, was the moſt ‘ eaſy and ſure. The ſecond, to preſent a petition,

‘ and obtain from the tribunes a favourable decree ‘ for all the miſſionaries, which would decide all ‘ differences. That they ſhould conſult among themſelves, what ſhould be the moſt convenient in the ‘ preſent conjuncture; and, when they had weighed the reaſons on both ſides, that they ſhould come ‘ back the next day to declare to him their poſitive ‘ reſolution.

The fathers ſignified their moſt humble acknowledgments to the emperor by cuſtomary proteſtations, and returned full with great hopes of happy ſucceſs, yet very uncertain what courſe to ſteer.

They conſidered on one hand the danger that there was to put their cauſe into the hands of the Lipou, who always declared againſt the chriſtian religion; that in all probability there needed no more to revive all the ancient accuſations which time ſeemed to have forgotten: That the miſſionaries ſettled in the provinces, whom they had concealed from the court till that time, would be obliged to quit China, or elſe forſake all their miſſions: That at leaſt, the proceedings of thoſe who had built new churches, and converted a great number of idolaters againſt the expreſs prohibitions of parliaments, was ſufficient to warrant the viceroy of Hamcheu: That in fine, things may be brought to paſs by the ſubtle devices of our enemies, and ſecret undertakings of the Bonzes, that they might be ſo far from quenching the flame of a particular perſecution, as we ſuppoſe, that we ſhould kindle a general conflagration in the empire, that would not terminate but in the total deſolation of chriſtianity.

Theſe reaſons, altho’ very ſubſtantial and ſolid in themſelves, were nevertheleſs balanced by the following reflections. What protection ſoever the emperors might have given till that time to the miſſionaries, yet they experienced, that it was not ſufficient to oblige all the Mandarines of provinces to countenance the chriſtians, and that there was a great number of them, who (prejudiced againſt us either by that univerſal contempt which the education of China did uſually create in them for foreigners, or by the calumnies of the Bonzes, or elſe by a falſe zeal for the publick good) thought it was a piece of good ſervice to deſtroy us, and ſpoil in a few days that which had been the work of ſeveral years.

Theſe particular perſecutions were ſo much the more feared, as they adminiſterd occaſion to our ſecret enemies, to declare themſelves openly againſt us, and to compoſe a ſtrong and great party, which was commonly upheld by the courts appointed for the ordering rites and ceremonies, who always waited for occaſions to ſtop the courſe of new foreigners into the ſtate; ſo that if in theſe critical conjunctures the emperors, by a particular providence, ſhould not have honoured us with their benevolence, chriſtianity would have long ſince been deſtroy'd in China, and, it may be, the memory of it would have been totally obliterated.

We ſhould therefore conſider, that the court perhaps would not be always ſo favourable to us; that there needed no more but one moment alone to loſe the emperor's gracious favour, or, what was ſtill more dangerous, to intail his indignation upon us, and thoſe of our religion; that, in this fickle ſtate wherein religion was, the leaſt oppoſition from the Mandarines would ſuffice to ſet the people's hearts againſt it; that the great ones themſelves durſt never declare, or be converted, for fear of being one day reſponſible to the parliaments for their converſion, which probably in time might be made an heinous crime.

On the contrary, if ſo be the chriſtian faith were once approved by publick edict, nothing afterward could diſturb its eſtabliſhment, ſince it would be leſs odious to the idolatrous people, becauſe the chriſtians would make a publick profeſſion of it, and, at laſt, the new miſſionaries would enter without interruption into the vaſt field of the goſpel, and would there ſow, without any contradiction, that ſacred word, which would then produce an hundred fold.

The only hope of ſuch a great benefit determined the fathers to try this laſt means; and ſo much the rather, becauſe they believed they could not in future time meet with any occaſion more favourable to accompliſh it. The remembrance of ſignal ſervices, father Verbieſt had rendered to the ſtate, was ſtill very recent; the emperor declared how ſenſible he was of the reſolution that father Grimaldi an Italian had taken to croſs the ſeas again for his ſake, and to undertake a moſt tedious journey. Father Thomas, a Flemming, was was wholly taken up in mathematicks, wherein he acquired the reputation of a learned knowing man, and moſt pious miſſionary. Father Pereira a Portugueſe, for his part, took a great deal of pains a long time in certain inſtruments, and ſeveral engines that the prince took great delight in: but that which did our buſineſs, in getting his heart, was the peace which father Gerbillon had but juſt then concluded, three hundred leagues from Pekin, between the Chineſe and Muſcovites. Prince Soſan, nearly related to the emperor, and plenipotentiary, ſtood amazed at his zeal, and publickly declared, that, but for him, this negotiation would never have terminated to the advantage of the empire. He ſpoke of it to the emperor to that purpoſe; and at that very time he inſpired him with ſentiments of eſteem and affection for this father, which have continued ever ſince beyond whatſoever we were able to expect or hope for. Beſides, this ſame father, together with father Bovet, both French, and of the number of thoſe whom the king ſent into China in 1685, applied themſelves for many years to teach geometry and philoſophy to the emperor, with ſuch ſucceſs, that he could never be weary in diſcourſing with them upon theſe matters.

But becauſe theſe zealous miſſionaries were fully perſuaded, that, when religion is concerned, human aſſiſtances are very inſignificant, if God Almighty do not ſecretly direct and order the whole work; they began to implore the aſſiſtance of him whom nothing is able to reſiſt; they ſpread open their wants before him, and diſcovered their hearts in his preſence, and told him with the ſame confidence that once animated Judith: *Make bare, make bare, O Lord, thy arm on our behalf, as thou didſt heretofore, and bring to nought the obſtacle our enemies oppoſe againſt us: Let thoſe who have boaſted that they could deſtroy the temple, who have already prophaned thy altar, and trodden under foot the tabernacle of thy holy name; let them at preſent be ſenſible, that before thee all their force is nothing but vanity and weakneſs: Put into our mouths, Lord, that holy word, and repleniſh our hearts with thoſe wiſe counſels that make truth always to triumph; to the end thy houſe, that hath been ſo many years in a tottering condition, may at this day be immoveably ſettled and confirmed; and that all nations may in the end confeſs, that thou only art the true God, and that, beſides thee, we ought to ſeek for none other* *.

After this fervent prayer they ſecretly preſented their petition to the emperor, that they were afterwards to offer him in publick. He read it, but not finding therein what was the moſt capable to make impreſſion upon the ſpirit of the Chineſe (for they inſiſted upon what principally related to the ſanctity and truth of the chriſtian religion) he drew up another himſelf in the Tartarian language, which he ſent back to the fathers, yet leaving them to their liberty

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* Judith, chap. ix.

to retrench, or add thereto, as they ſhall judge moſt convenient.

Indeed, if one do but never ſo little reflect upon the particular character of the emperors of China, one cannot ſufficiently admire, that this preſent emperor ſhould vouchſafe to deſcend from the loftieſt degree of grandeur, which he obſerves every where elſe, nay even in reſpect of the greateſt princes, to make himſelf familiar with pitiful miſſionaries: for a man to conſider after what manner he takes a particular account of all their affairs; how he ſpeaks to them, how he puts them in a way, would he not conclude that it is a private man that manages the concerns of his friend? Yet nevertheleſs, it is one of the greateſt kings in the world, that is pleaſed thus to ſtickle to pleaſe a company of ſtrangers, even at the peril of the fundamental laws of the nation.

But after all, it is no wonder that a God, who, to eſtabliſh his religion, humbled himſelf ſo far, as to make himſelf like to men, does oblige ſometimes the greateſt princes of the world to diveſt themſelves of their majeſty and innate pride, to co-operate and concur in this grand work. For certainly, what care ſoever we may have taken to make this prince favourable to us, yet muſt we needs herein principally acknowledge the efficacy of divine grace. It is the almighty voice of the Lord that alone can, to ſpeak in the ſcripture expreſſion, *bruiſe the cedars, and ſhake the mountains of the wilderneſs*; that is to ſay, abaſe the great ones of the world, and give to their hearts what motion he pleaſes.

Whilſt all theſe things were tranſacted at Pekin, the viceroy of Hamcheu, that had now leiſure to make ſome reflections upon his behaviour, was not peaceable in his province. The credit of prince Soſan did grievouſly perplex him; and above all, he dreaded his juſt reſentment: for to pacify him, he thought it the wiſeſt courſe to ſend one of his officers to him, under pretence to juſtify himſelf to him, but in effect, to exaſperate the principal Mandarines of Lipou againſt the miſſionaries, in caſe he ſhould find any opportunity to do it.

At that time this officer arrived at court, but prince Soſan would not ſo much as hear him; and, packing him away, briſkly told him, that he much wonder'd that his maſter made ſuch little account of perſons whom the emperor honoured with his affection, and employed and truſted in his ſervice.

As to what relates to their buſineſs, I am no more concerned in it than the emperor would himſelf. Theſe fathers have implored his protection, and he well underſtands how to do them juſtice without my intermeddling: beſides, when I wrote on their behalf, it was not ſo much to do them a kindneſs, as thereby to exhibit a token of friendſhip to the viceroy, in plucking him from the precipice whither he had ſo indiſcreetly thrown himſelf.

This anſwer did ſo ſtartle this officer, that, without ever dreaming of making any other progreſs, he returned to his maſter at Hamcheu to render an account of the ill ſucceſs of his commiſſion. The fathers, who had notice of it, underſtood by that, that they were to loſe no time, and that they were ſpeedily to improve the good diſpoſition of prince Soſan; ſo that upon Candlemas-day they went to the palace, and offer'd to the emperor, with the uſual ceremonies, the petition that he himſelf had compoſed, of which ſee here the tranſlation.

'May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

'WE expoſe to you, with the moſt perfect
'ſubmiſſion, and moſt profound reſpect that
'we are capable of, the beginning, end, inducements,
'and motives of our moſt humble requeſt, being
'confident that you will vouchſafe to hear it with
'the

‘ the ſame prudence that attends all your actions, ‘ and with that benevolence wherewith you have ‘ been graciouſly pleaſed to honour us.

‘ On the ninth month of the moon, father Intorcetta, one of your majeſty's ſubjects, whoſe abode ‘ is in the city of Hamcheu, did acquaint us that ‘ the viceroy had ſtrictly charged the Mandarines of ‘ his province to pull down all the temples of the ‘ chriſtians, to burn the printing tables, upon which ‘ are engraven all the books of our religion. Moreover, he hath publickly declared, that our doctrine ‘ is falſe and dangerous, and conſequently not to be ‘ tolerated in the empire, and hath added ſeveral ‘ other things moſt diſadvantageous to us.

‘ Upon this news, ſir, ſeized with horror, and ‘ penetrated with grief, we thought ourſelves obliged ‘ to have recourſe to your majeſty, as the common ‘ father of the afflicted, to lay before you the deplorable condition whereunto we are reduced; ‘ for, except you grant us your protection, it is altogether impoſſible to avoid the ſtratagems of our ‘ enemies, and to ward the blow wherewith they ‘ threaten us.

‘ That which adminiſters comfort to us, ſir, when ‘ we appear at your majeſty's feet, is to ſee with ‘ what wiſdom you influence and move all the parts ‘ of your empire, as if it were the body, of which ‘ you are the ſoul; and with what unconcernment ‘ and impartiality you regulate the intereſt of each ‘ private man, without acceptation of perſons; inſomuch that you could not be at reſt if you knew ‘ but one ſingle ſubject oppreſſed by injuſtice, or ‘ but even deprived of that rank and recompence ‘ he deſerves.

‘ You ſurpaſs, great ſir, the mightieſt kings ‘ amongſt your predeceſſors, who have in their times ‘ permitted falſe religions in China; for you do intirely love truth, and do not approve of falſhood;

‘ for this reaſon it is, that, in taking your progreſs ‘ to view your provinces, you have given a thouſand ‘ teſtimonies of your royal affection to the European ‘ miſſionaries that were in your road; as if you ‘ meant thereby to teſtify, that you value their ‘ doctrine, and that you would be very glad that ‘ they would ſettle in your ſtates; what we deliver ‘ here, in publick, is generally known to the whole ‘ empire.

‘ Therefore, when we behold the viceroy of Ham-‘ cheu to ſtile the chriſtian religion, the falſe and dan-‘ gerous religion; when we are informed that he uſes ‘ all his endeavours to deſtroy it; how are able to ‘ ſtifle our juſt ſorrow, and forbear to declare to ‘ your majeſty what we ſuffer?

‘ This is not the firſt time, ſir, that they have ‘ perſecuted us without any reaſon; therefore father ‘ Adam Schaal, your ſubject, on whom your pre-‘ deceſſors heap'd many extraordinary favours, made ‘ it known to all the court, that the rules of the ‘ celeſtial motions, eſtabliſhed by the ancient aſtro-‘ nomers of China, were all falſe; he propoſed others, ‘ that did perfectly agree with the conſtellations that ‘ were approved, and made uſe of with no ſmall ‘ ſucceſs, ſo that this change brought order again ‘ into the empire. Your majeſty is not ignorant of ‘ what paſt at that time in Pekin; we may, we hope, ‘ have leave to remember how matters ſtood there, ‘ ſince they are ſo many ſingular favours we there re-‘ ceived; yet upon the account of exploding and ‘ aboliſhing of theſe errors, how much did the father ‘ afterwards ſuffer by calumnies of his enemies? ‘ Yam-quam ſien, and thoſe of his faction, falſly ‘ accuſed him of ſeveral crimes, under pretence of ‘ novelty, as if this new aſtronomy had not agreed ‘ with heaven; he died, not being able at that time ‘ to juſtify himſelf; but your majeſty put father ‘ Verbieſt in his place, and heaped on him ſo many

‘ favours, that the life of this father was too ſhort, ‘ and his words too faint to demonſtrate to all the ‘ world the greatneſs of his acknowledgments: yet ‘ did he deeply reſent all theſe benefits, and it was ‘ on purpoſe not to be ungrateful, that he was ‘ buſied for above twenty years in compoſing all ‘ ſorts of books for the publick benefit, both in ‘ aſtronomy, arithmetick, muſick, and philoſophy, ‘ that are ſtill extant in the palace, together with ‘ divers others which he had not time to compleat ‘ and finiſh.

‘ But, ſince your majeſty is perfectly inſtructed in ‘ all theſe particulars, we dare not preſume to tire ‘ out your patience by a longer diſcourſe; we do ‘ only humbly beſeech your majeſty to conſider, ‘ that all this is not ſufficient to intitle us to the ‘ people’s affection for us, and confidence in us. ‘ If, as they accuſe us, the law that we preach be ‘ falſe and dangerous, how can we, ſir, juſtify the ‘ conduct of princes, who have honour’d us with ‘ their eſteem?

‘ Neverthele ſs, not to mention any thing of your ‘ predeceſſors, your majeſty yourſelf hath made ſo ‘ ſure of our loyalty, that you order’d father Verbieſt to found ſome cannon of a new model, to ‘ put an end to a dangerous war: you made father ‘ Grimaldi croſs the vaſt ocean to go into Muſcovy, ‘ with the letters and ſeals of the high court of the ‘ militia; you ſent the fathers Gerbillon and Pereira, ‘ upon very important affairs, to the very fartheſt ‘ parts of Tartary; nevertheleſs, your majeſty well ‘ knows, that thoſe, who are governed by the principles of a falſe religion, never uſe to ſerve their ‘ prince faithfully; they almoſt ever abandon themſelves to their own paſſions, and never aim at any ‘ thing but their own particular intereſt.

‘ If therefore we do exactly diſcharge our duty, ‘ and, if to this very day we have always ſought the 'publick good, it is moſt manifeſt this zeal proceeds 'from an heart well affected, full of eſteem and veneration, and (if we may be bold to ſay ſo) of a ſingular affection for the perſon of your majeſty. On the 'contrary, if this heart once ceaſe to ſubmit to you, it 'would be, from that very time, contrary to right reaſon, good ſenſe, and all ſentiments of humanity.

'This being ſuppoſed, ſir, we humbly beſeech 'you to conſider, that, after the fatigues of a tedious 'voyage, we are at length arrived in your empire, 'exempt from that ſpirit of ambition and covetouſneſs, that commonly bring other men thither, but 'with an ardent deſire to preach to your people the 'only true religion.

'And truly, when we appeared here the firſt 'time, we were entertain'd with abundance of marks 'of diſtinction, as we have often ſaid already, and 'which we cannot repeat too often. In the tenth 'year of Chun-tchi they preferr'd us to the ſole direction of the mathematicks. In the fourteenth year 'of the ſame reign, they gave us leave to build a 'church at Pekin, and the emperor himſelf was 'willing to grant us a particular place for the burial 'of our dead. In the twenty-ſeventh year of your 'majeſty's glorious reign, your majeſty honoured the 'memory of father Verbieſt not only by new titles, 'but alſo by the care you took to cauſe the laſt offices to be perform'd to him, with an almoſt royal 'pomp and magnificence. Some while after, you 'appointed an apartment, and maſters to the new 'French miſſionaries, to facilitate their learning of 'the Tartarian tongue. In a word, you ſeem'd 'ſo well ſatisfied with their deportment that you 'cauſed the ſervices they had render'd to the ſtate by 'their voyages into Tartary, and negotiation with 'the Muſcovites, to be inſerted in the records of the 'nation: What a happineſs, ſir, and a glory is it for 'us to be judged capable of ſerving ſo great a prince!

‘ Since therefore your majeſty, who does ſo wiſely ‘ govern this grand monarchy, vouchſafeth to em‘ploy us, and put ſuch confidence in us, how is it ‘ poſſible there ſhould be one ſingle Mandarine ſo ir‘rational to refuſe one of our brethren permiſſion to ‘ live in his province? Verily, ſir, one cannot ſuffi‘ciently deplore the hard fate of that good old man, ‘ who, in a little corner of the earth, humbly requires ‘ ſo much ſpace, as is neceſſary peaceably to ſpend the ‘ remainder of his days, which yet he cannot obtain.

‘ It is for this reaſon, ſir, that all of us, your ma‘jeſty's moſt humble ſubjects, who are here like for‘ſaken orphans, that would injure no body; nay, ‘ who endeavour to avoid law-ſuits, quarrels, wrang‘lings, and the leaſt conteſtations; it is for this rea‘ſon (we ſay) that we beſeech you to take our cauſe ‘ in hand, with thoſe ſentiments of equity that are ‘ ſo eſſential to you; have ſome compaſſion, ſir, up‘on perſons who have committed no fault; and, if ‘ your majeſty, after being fully informed of our ‘ carriage, does really find, that we are innocent, we ‘ beſeech you to let all the empire underſtand, by a ‘ publick edict, the judgment you entertain of our ‘ morals and doctrine. It is for the obtaining this ‘ favour, that we aſſume the liberty of preſenting to ‘ you this requeſt. In the meantime all and every ‘ your ſubjects the miſſionaries will expect with fear, ‘ and intire ſubmiſſion, what you ſhall be pleaſed to ‘ appoint, touching the premiſes. In the thirtieth ‘ year of the reign of Cham-hi, the 16th day of the ‘ 12th month of the moon.’

The emperor graciouſly receiv'd this petition, and ſent it the 18th of the ſame month to the court of rites, with an order to examine it, and, with the firſt opportunity, to make report of it to him; but, becauſe there is a vacation in all the courts of judicature in China, much about the ſame time, until the 15th of the firſt month of the year following, the Lipou could not anſwer till the 18th of the ſaid month: upon the whole, their judgment was much contrary to the emperor's intentions, and intereſt of the miſſionaries. For the Mandarines, having reported at large the ancient edicts enacted againſt the chriſtian religion, concluded, that this buſineſs required no farther diſcuſſion; and that they were to ſtick cloſe to the firſt orders of parliaments, and of the court, which prohibited, upon grievous penalties, the natural born ſubjects, to entertain the new doctrine of the Europeans; that, notwithſtanding they deem'd it convenient to preſerve the church in the city of Hamcheu, and to give orders to the Mandarines of that province, not to confound the chriſtian religion with the ſeditious ſects of China.

The emperor was, in a manner, as much concerned as the miſſionaries at this new decree: when they preſented it to him, he diſcovered ſome trouble at it, and left it for ſeveral days in his cloſet, without declaring himſelf, to the end that the Mandarines of Lipou, having notice of it, might have time to come back; but, when he ſaw their obſtinacy, he was not willing to make turbulent ſpirits to rebel; and, reſolved at laſt, tho' ſore againſt his will, to ſign it.

This news threw the fathers into a great conſternation; and one Chao a gentleman of the bed-chamber, whom the emperor ſent to comfort them, found them in a condition worthy of compaſſion. He was troubled at it himſelf (for he loves us dearly, and hath done us upon ſeveral occaſions moſt ſignal ſervices.) This officer endeavour'd, as he had orders, to moderate their affliction; but, whether it was that theſe fathers were not maſters of themſelves, or, that they had quite given over all thoughts of keeping any further correſpondence with a prince that had deſerted them, they utter'd upon this occaſion whatſoever the moſt ſenſible grief is able to inſpire into afflicted perſons.

What ſignify, my lord, ſay they, all the favours it hath hitherto pleaſed the emperor to do us, ſince at this conjuncture himſelf makes them unprofitable? Was it to tumble us down in a more illuſtrious manner, that he apply'd himſelf ſo long time to exalt us? What delight will he take hereafter to ſee us, covered with ſhame and confuſion, to ſerve for a laughing-ſtock to our enemies, and be a ſpectacle to the whole empire? Will that prince, who loved us ſo dearly, will he be able hereafter, without being moved at it, to hear that the rabble inſult over us? That his petty officers make us to be beaten in open courts? That viceroys baniſh us from their provinces, that they exile us ſhamefully from his empire?

We lay out ourſelves for him, our cares, ſtudies, and all our watchings are given to him. One part of our brethren are already dead by their labours, others have impair'd their health by the ſame; and we who are ſtill alive, enforced by the ſame deſire of pleaſing him, willingly and freely ſacrifice all the precious moments of our life to him.

We hoped to merit by this zeal, that he would at length approve of the religion, which we preach to his people (for why ſhould we diſſemble the matter to you, to you who have ſo long known the real ſentiments of our hearts) that was, you know, the only motive of all our undertakings: how powerful, how magnificent ſoever this prince may be, we ſhould never have had the leaſt thoughts of coming ſo far to ſerve him, if the intereſt of our moſt holy faith had not engaged us therein. Nevertheleſs he proſcribes it at this day, and ſigns with his own hand the ſhameful decree of our condemnation. There you ſee, my lord, what all our hopes are come to; there is the fruit of all our labours: With how much greater calmneſs would we have received the ſentence of death, than an edict of this nature? For, do not imagine, that we are able to ſurvive the loſs of chriſtianity.

This diſcourſe, attended with a great deal of trouble, and a torrent of tears, made a great impreſſion upon the officer's ſpirit ; he went immediately to report it to the emperor, and deſcribed to him the father's ſorrow in ſuch lively colours, that this good prince gave way to ſome emotion. *I have always*, ſaid he, *ſought out all occaſions, to do them a kindneſs, but the Chineſe have traverſed all my good deſigns, I could at this time forbear following the ſtream*; *but, in ſhort, however the caſe ſtands, they may make account that I love them, and that I ſhall not forſake them.*

In effect, he began more than ever to employ them in his ſervice ; but yet, he no longer found the ſame eagerneſs in the execution of his orders, nor the ſame ſereneneſs and alacrity upon their countenances. They always appeared before him dejected, mournful, and as if their heads had been out of order by the ſhrewd blow they lately receiv'd. However, he was ſo far from being diſheartened, that he propoſed to them, to ſend for a doctor of phyſick to court, who was newly arrived at Macao, who, that he might be the more ſerviceable to the miſſions, had turned prieſt of our company.

The fathers made anſwer, that this doctor had wiſh'd, and that too with a great deal of paſſion, to employ his ſkill, and all the arcana of his art, to preſerve ſuch a precious health, as that of his majeſty ; but, being amazed at the decree that had paſt againſt the chriſtians, he was quite off from any deſign to come into China ; and that he was preparing to return into Europe: that, nevertheleſs, ſince his majeſty ordered it ſhould be ſo, they would write with all expedition to Mocao to have him come. Whilſt the miſſionaries were over head and ears in their melancholy, the viceroy of Hamcheu triumphed at his firſt ſucceſs, and caſt about how to take new meaſures, to finiſh his work. He ſet all the commiſſioners of the officers at work, for ſeveral days, to draw out copies of the new decree, to have them diſpers'd throughout all the provinces ; at laſt, he iſſued out more ſevere orders againſt the chriſtians than the former. In fine, no longer doubting of the victory, he ſent to the emperor an ample requeſt againſt the miſſionaries, to accompliſh their undoing; but this requeſt came a little too late: and, when it was preſented, the face of affairs was already alter'd.

For prince Soſan, not being able to withſtand the ſollicitations of the fathers, and eſpecially of father Gerbillon, whoſe particular friend he was, reſolved to ſollicit afreſh on our behalf; wherefore he went and found the emperor, and repreſented to him whatſoever the moſt zealous chriſtian could poſſibly have ſpoken on the like occaſion.

He ſet before him, again, the zeal and devotion of the fathers in whatſoever reſpected his perſon, the the ſervices they had render'd the ſtate during the wars, their being intent to perfect the ſciences, and to rectify the kalendar. *In a word, ſir*, ſaid he, *they are a ſort of people, that make no account of their lives, when ſerving or pleaſing you is in queſtion. 'Tis true, all this could not deſerve, that your majeſty ſhould approve of their faith, if it be otherwiſe dangerous; but, was there ever a more wholſome doctrine than theirs, or more beneficial to the government of a people?*

The emperor, who joyfully heard this diſcourſe, yet for all that perſiſted in his former determination, *It is done now*, ſaid he to him, *I ſhould have done myſelf a kindneſs, to have favoured theſe honeſt miſſionaries; but the outrageous carriage of the* Mandarines *againſt them did not permit me to follow my own inclination.*

How, ſir, replied the prince, *are not you the maſter? And when the buſineſs was to do juſtice to ſubjects, ſo eminent as theſe are, could not you interpoſe your authority? I will go myſelf, if your majeſty thinks fit, to theſe gentlemen, and I am not without hopes of bringing them to terms.* At laſt the emperor, not being any longer able to hold it out againſt ſo preſſing ſollicitations, cauſes a letter immediately to be diſpatched to the Colaos, their aſſeſſors, and to all the Tartarian Mandarines of Lipou; and this is the purport of the letter.

The thirty firſt year of the reign of Cham-hi, the ſecond day of the ſecond month of the moon. Yi-ſam-ho, miniſter of ſtate, declares to you the will and pleaſure of the emperor in theſe terms.

The Europeans in my court have for a long time been directors of the mathematicks. During the civil wars they have rendered me moſt effectual ſervice, by means of ſome cannon that they got caſt: their prudence and ſingular addreſs, accompanied with much zeal and indefatigable toil, obliges me once more to conſider them. And, beſides that, their law is not ſeditious, and does not induce people to revolt; ſo that it ſeems good to us, to permit it, to the end that all thoſe, who are willing to embrace it, may freely go into the churches, and make publick profeſſion of the worſhip there performed to the ſupreme Lord of Heaven.

Our will and pleaſure therefore is, that all, and ſeveral the edicts that hitherto have been publiſhed againſt it, by, and with the advice and counſel of our tribunals, be at preſent torn and burnt. You miniſters of ſtate, and you Tartarian Mandarines of the ſovereign court of rites, aſſemble together, examine the matter, and give me your advice upon the whole with all ſpeed.

Prince Soſan himſelf was preſent at this aſſembly, according as he and the emperor had agreed; and albeit he was no chriſtian, yet did he ſpeak after ſuch a pathetical and taking manner in favour of us, that he ſeemed rather to defend his own, or the ſtates cauſe, than the concerns of a foreign religion; theſe are his own words, without adding one ſyllable, as they are found in the original, which I faithfully tranſlate.

‘ You know, gentlemen, with what application, ‘ what zeal, and loyalty theſe Europeans buſy them- ‘ ſelves in the ſervice of his majeſty, The greateſt ‘ men amongſt us, tho’ concerned to preſerve and ‘ maintain our conqueſts, have rather devoted them-

‘ ſelves to glory, riches, and making their own fortunes, than to the ſettling the ſtate upon a ſound bottom; very few of them do purely aim at the publick good. Theſe ſtrangers, on the other hand, exempt from all paſſion, love the empire more than we do ourſelves, and do frankly ſacrifice their own repoſe to the tranquillity of our provinces.

‘ We have experienc'd the ſame during the whole courſe of our civilwars, and in the late bickerings we had with the Muſcovite; for, to whom do you ſuppoſe us obliged for the happy ſucceſs of this negotiation? It would without all queſtion be conſiſtent with my intereſt, to aſcribe all the glory of it to myſelf, who have been the plenipotentiary for the peace; but, if I were ſo unjuſt as to do myſelf that honour, to the prejudice of theſe fathers, the chieftains of the enemies troops, all my own officers, and my own army would ſay I told an untruth.

‘ It is, gentlemen, theſe fathers, who by their prudence, and inſight into affairs, and the juſt temper and moderation that they brought, put an end to that important affair. Without their counſel, we ſhould have been forced to exact, at the expence of our blood, the rights which the injuſtice of our enemies did ſo obſtinately refuſe to the emperor; or, perhaps you would have had the trouble to ſee us wholly diveſted of them; or, at leaſt I ſhould have been no longer in a condition to defend them.

‘ What have we done, gentlemen, in return for ſuch eminent ſervice? Nay, what can we do for a company of men, who demand neither riches, nor places of truſt, nor honours? Who eſteem and reſpect us, without ſo much as caring whether we do ſo by them! Certainly we ought to be concerned, if it were not in our power ſome way or other to oblige ſtrangers, who do ſo generouſly ſacrifice themſelves for us; and I am inclin'd to believe, gentlemen, that, when you have made reflections 'thereon, you will give me thanks for having diſcovered to you the only way whereby they can become ſenſible of our acknowledgment.

'They have a law, which is to them inſtead of 'all the riches in the world. They adore a Deity, 'who alone makes up all their comfort and happineſs. Suffer them only freely to enjoy the benefit they poſſeſs, and permit them to communicate 'it to our people; altho' in that very thing they rather do us a kindneſs, than we do them; yet they 'will be grateful to us, and accept it from our hands, 'as the recompence of all their ſervices.

'The Lamas of Tartary, and the Bonzes of China, are not troubled in the exerciſe of their religion. 'Nay, the very Mahometans have rear'd a moſque 'at Hamcheu, that domineers over all our publick 'edifices. They oppoſe no banks to theſe torrents, 'that threaten inundation to all China: men connive, 'they approve of in ſome meaſure all theſe unprofitable and dangerous ſects; and, now when the Europeans ſue to us for liberty to preach up a doctrine, 'that contains no other than maxims of the moſt refined virtue, we do not only repulſe them with diſdain, but think we do good ſervice to condemn 'them: juſt as if the laws, that oblige us to ſhut up 'the entrance into our empire againſt ſuperſtition, and 'lying vanities, had likewiſe proſcribed naked truth.

The prince, expatiating much upon this point, was interrupted by the heads of the aſſembly, who remonſtrated to him, that, ſay what he could, there was ſtill ſome danger leſt this new ſect might occaſion ſome diſorder in proceſs of time. And, that it was the part of good policy to ſtifle theſe little monſters of rebellion and diſcord, in their very birth. That, in ſhort, they were foreigners, whoſe ſpirit and ſecret deſigns were capable of adminiſtring ſome ſuſpicion.

'What ſuſpicion, reply'd the prince? I have been 'Colao this ten years, and I never heard any complaint againſt the chriſtians. Believe me, gentle-

‘ men, it were to be wiſh’d, that the whole empire ‘ would embrace their religion. For, is it not that ‘ religion that commands children to honour and ‘ obey their parents? Subjects to be faithful to their ‘ ſuperiors, ſervants exactly to perform the will of ‘ their maſters: That forbids to kill, to ſteal, and ‘ to cozen; not to covet any thing that is your ‘ neighbours. That abhors perjury and calumny. ‘ That diſlikes lying and falſhood. That inſpires ‘ modeſty, ſimplicity, uprightneſs and temperance. ‘ Examine, gentlemen, and ſound, if poſſible, the ‘ heart of man; if there you find one ſingle vice ‘ which the chriſtian law does not forbid, or one virtue that it does not enjoin, and counſel; I leave you ‘ to your liberty to declare againſt it. But now, if ‘ all things in it be holy and conſonant to reaſon, ‘ why do you ſtill boggle to approve of it?

After that, the prince, ſeeing their minds to be wavering, propoſed the ten commandments of our religion, and explained them with ſo much eloquence, that the Mandarines looking one upon another, finding nothing to offer againſt it, did ingenuouſly confeſs that one might conform to this new doctrine without any danger. The emperor, informed of what was debated, was pleaſed (for to render the action more famous) to have alſo all the miniſters of ſtate to be convoked together, with the Mandarines of Lipou, who were Chineſe, to whom they made known before-hand the reſolution of the Tartarian Mandarines.

In this general aſſembly, they repeated all that was ſpoken in the private aſſembly; and, after prince Soſan had left no ſtone unturned to recover the Chineſe from their old prejudice, they came at length to this reſult, that a law ſhould be enacted favourable to the chriſtians, which was drawn up in form of a petition, to be preſented to the emperor, to obtain his confirmation of it; it was to this effect.

Heoupatai, ſubject to your majeſty, preſident of the ſovereign tribunal of rites, and chief of ſeveral other orders,

orders, preſents to you this moſt humble petition, with all the ſubmiſſion and reſpect, which he and all his aſſeſſors ought to have for all your commands, eſpecially when you do us the honour to require our advice about the important affairs of ſtate.

We have ſeriouſly examin'd what any way relates to the Europeans, who attracted from the extremities of the world by the fame of your ſingular prudence, and other your eminent qualities, have paſt that vaſt extent of ſeas, which ſeparates us from Europe. Since they have lived amongſt us, they have merited our eſteem and acknowledgement, by the ſignal ſervices they have rendered us in the civil and foreign wars; by their continual application to compoſing of books very curious and profitable; for their uprightneſs and ſincere affection for the commonwealth.

Beſides which, theſe ſame Europeans are very peaceable, they do not excite any commotions, or foment differences in theſe our provinces; they do wrong to no man, they commit no notorious facts; moreover, their doctrine hath no affinity with the falſe and dangerous ſects that infeſt the empire; neither do their maxims incline turbulent ſpirits to ſedition.

Since therefore we do neither hinder the Lamas of Tartary, nor Bonzes of China from having temples, nor from offering incenſe therein to their pagods; much leſs can we, with any reaſon, reſtrain the Europeans, (who neither act nor teach any thing contrary to the wholſome laws) from having likewiſe their reſpective churches, there to preach their religion in publick. Certainly theſe two things would be point blank contrary to one another, and we ſhould manifeſtly ſeem to contradict ourſelves.

We therefore judge it meet and expedient, that all the temples dedicated to the Lord of heaven, in what place ſoever they may be, ought to be preſerved; and that we may ſafely permit all thoſe who would honour this God, to enter into his temples, to offer incenſe to him, and to pay that worſhip to him, that hath hitherto *been practiſed by the chriſtians, according to their ancient cuſtom; ſo that none may, for the time to come, preſume to oppoſe the ſame.*

In the meantime we ſhall expect your majeſty's orders thereupon, to the end we may communicate them to the governors and viceroys, as well at Pekin, as at other cities of the provinces. Done in the thirty-firſt year of the reign of Cham-hi, the third day of the ſecond month of the moon. Signed, the preſident of the ſovereign tribunal of rites, with his aſſeſſors; and underneath the four miniſters of ſtate, called Colaos, with their general officers and Mandarines of the firſt order.

The emperor received this decree with unexpreſſible joy; he ratify'd it forthwith, and diſpatch'd a copy of it to the fathers, ſealed with the ſeal of the empire, to be, ſays he, perpetually preſerved in the archives of their houſe. Some time after, he cauſed it to be publiſhed throughout the whole empire; and the ſupreme tribunal of rites, ſending it to the principal officers, added theſe enſuing words. *Wherefore, you viceroys of provinces, be ſure you receive this imperial edict with a moſt profound reſpect; and, as ſoon as it comes to your hands, read it attentively; value it; and ſee you fail not to execute it punctually, conformable to the example that we have given you ourſelves. Moreover, cauſe copies of it to be taken, to be diſperſed into all the places of our government, and acquaint us of what you ſhall do in this point.*

So ſoon as father Intorcetta had notice of what had paſt at Pekin, he departed for court, and went to throw himſelf at the emperor's feet, to render him moſt humble thanks in his own, and in the name of all the miſſionaries of China. This good prince, when he had beſtowed on him many demonſtrations of affection, cauſed him to be conducted back again into his province, by father Thomas, Mandarine of the mathematicks. He made his entrance into this city of Hamcheu in triumph, ſurrounded by chriſtians; and, received by their acclamations, who look'd upon him as an angel of peace.

Nevertheleſs, as God mixes always ſome bitterneſs with our comforts, the joy, this good father had conceived, was ſoon overcaſt, and allay'd by the utter ruin of his church, involved ſome time before in a publick conflagration, wherewith the beſt part of the city was conſumed.

This accident gave occaſion to father Thomas, to deſire the viceroy to build a new church for the father; and he himſelf gave him to underſtand, that the emperor expected it from him. This Mandarine was intolerably vexed at the ill ſucceſs of his enterprize, which the late arrival of the father increaſed; but he was quite beſides himſelf, to think he muſt be forced to lodge a ſtranger honourably in his capital city, whom he would, with all his heart, have baniſh'd ſome days before from his province; yet he diſſembled the matter like a wiſe man; and, to comply with the time, he afforded the miſſionary one of the fineſt houſes in the city, till ſuch time as, at his own charges, he ſhould have rebuilt the ancient college.

It was not at Hamcheu alone, that the chriſtian religion ſeem'd to triumph; all the churches of the empire, which the new edict, in ſome reſpect, drew out of captivity, by granting to the people liberty of conſcience, gave great demonſtrations of joy; but the city of Macao, that ſerved for a cradle to the infant chriſtianity, made its joy to appear by a ſolemn holiday, which was accompanied with all the tokens of publick mirth and chearfulneſs, which the people's devotion rendered much more ſolemn.

Thoſe, who ſhall conſider the conſtitution of the government of China, the almoſt unſurmountable difficulties that ſtrangers have met with in ſcrewing themſelves into it; the averſion of mens minds from novelty in matters of religion; and, on the other hand, the ſmall company of miſſionaries Europe hath ſupply'd us with, the civilwars, and revolutions, that have ſo often diſcompoſed the ſtate in this latter age, will ſeriouſly confeſs, that this occurrence, one of the moſt memorable, that probably hath happened ſince the infancy of the church, cannot be the product of human wiſdom. * *Deus autem rex noſter ante ſæcula operatus eſt ſalutem in medio terræ*; *tu confirmaſti in virtute tua mare——tu confregiſti capita draconis*; *tuus eſt dies & tua eſt nox.* It is our God, 'tis our everlaſting king, who hath wrought ſalvation in this vaſt kingdom, which they call the middle of the earth. He it is, who hath for ever brought a calm upon this ſea, ſo much agitated, and infamous hitherto for ſo many ſhipwracks. Thou haſt, O Lord, bruiſed the head of that proud † dragon whoſe name was ſo dreadful. It is now then that the day and the night, that is to ſay, the Eaſt and the Weſt belong to thee; foraſmuch as both worlds have at laſt ſubmitted to thy empire.

At ſuch time as I had the honour to preſent to the moſt holy father, that idolatry in the Eaſt, attacked on all ſides by the miniſters of the goſpel, was juſt upon the point of falling; and that, if once China could be drawn in to declare itſelf in favour of us, all the people adjacent, led by their example, would quickly break their idols in pieces, and would not be long before they ſubmitted to the yoke of the chriſtian faith; this thought alone tranſported this holy pontiff with joy, and revived that ſincere piety, and fervent zeal in his heart, that he ſhews upon all occaſions for the ſalvation of ſouls; but he told me that ſuch a great change as that was no ordinary miracle.

What ſentiments will he have, my lord, when he underſtands that what (as things then ſtood) he ſcarce durſt hope for are now at laſt accompliſh'd for the glory of his pontificate, and univerſal benefit of Chriſtendom. We know, moreover, that, ſince this famous edict, the Chineſe run in crowds to be baptiſed: That the Mandarines, ſtill idolaters, build churches to the only true God: That a prince of the blood hath abjured his errors, and embraced the faith and croſs of Jeſus Chriſt: That the emperor himſelf cauſeth a church to be erected in his palace, and lodges the miniſters of the goſpel near his own perſon.

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* Pſal. 73.

† The dragon is the emperor's arms, and is adored in China.

Theſe happy preparations will, without all queſtion, oblige the holy father to employ all his cares to the intire compleating of ſo great a work; to that effect we demand of him paſtors formed by his own hand, and repleniſhed with his ſpirit: miſſionaries altogether unbyaſſed, learned, ſelf-denying, that join prudence with evangelical ſimplicity; who may ſeek the glory of Chriſt, and that of the nation, rather than their own.

Laſt of all, we heartily wiſh that all chriſtian kingdoms, out of emulation one of another, may ſtrive (under the pope's authority) who ſhall ſtill ſend moſt miniſters into theſe vaſt countries, to ſhare with us in our labours, and extend our conqueſts. Nay, tho' the moſt populous univerſities and moſt famous ſeminaries ſhould be tranſplanted thither, it would yet be but few. Yea, and with all theſe aſſiſtances, we ſhould notwithſtanding, to ſpeak in ſcripture language, groan under the burthen and heat of the day. What would become of us, if we leave this new born world to a ſmall number of labourers, whom the piety of ſome do there maintain?

It is to beg this favour, that I aſſume the boldneſs, my lord, to intruſt you, at this time, with the concerns of the miſſions. I am well aſſured that you never undertook any buſineſs of conſequence for the good of Chriſtendom, but you accompliſh'd it. Now, altho' this that I propoſe to you were ten times more difficult than it is indeed, I am, in a manner, ſure of ſucceſs, as ſoon as ever you ſhall pleaſe to take it upon you.

Yet notwithſtanding, my lord, to ſucceed happily in this buſineſs, it is not neceſſary to exert, and put in practice all thoſe qualities of mind, that make you almoſt ever ſuperior to great enterprizes. That conſummate wiſdom, that conducts you thro' the moſt ſure roads. That continual intention of mind, which the hardeſt labour cannot interrupt. That dexterous inſinuating conduct, ſo impenetrable to the quickeſt eye. In a word, that art, ſo peculiar to you of perſuading, and obtaining what you pleaſe. All this is not requiſite to the buſineſs in hand, you need do no more here but abandon yourſelf to your own zeal, and uſe that lively and natural eloquence, that animates your diſcourſes, every time you are pleaſed, in the ſacred college, to ſtand up for the intereſt of religion, or when you repreſent to Chriſt's vicar the urgent neceſſities of the church.

Your care, your piety, my lord, will be ſeconded with as many apoſtles, as you ſhall procure miſſionaries for us: then will the idolaters, newly converted, and believers eſtabliſh'd and ſettled in faith, be equally ſenſible of the great benefits that you ſhall procure them, and the people, enlightened by theſe divine lights, which the holy ſee ſhall diſperſe as far as the extremity of the earth, will, all their lives long, bleſs the paternal charity of the vicar of Chriſt, and ardent zeal of his miniſters. I am, in the moſt profound reſpect,

My Lord,

Your Eminence's moſt humble,

and moſt obedient Servant.

L. J.

A Let-

LETTER XIV.

To Monſieur the Abbot B'gnon.

A General Idea of the Obſervations we have made in the Indies, *and in* China.

Sir,

ALtho' you ſhould not be at the head of the moſt ingenious and learned men in Europe, by the rank you hold in the Academy Royal; yet the paſſion I have always had to give you ſome marks of my eſteem, and to improve by your knowledge, would engage me to communicate to you what we have performed in the Indies, as to the perfection of ſciences.

It is, ſir, for the credit of this illuſtrious academy (with which we have ſuch a ſtrict friendſhip and correſpondence) that a perſon of your merit ſhould ſeem to have any eſteem for the perſons it employs in its function; and I ſuppoſe, the protection, you are pleaſed to afford us in the world, will be taken kindly by them; but it is yet more our particular intereſt, that you would ſeverely and ſtrictly examine our works, and that, when you have implored the eſteem of the publick on our behalf, you would, by an impartial and learned criticizing, take ſome pains to perfect us, and make us one day worthy of its approbation, and your own.

It is not, ſir, that I have a mind, in this place, to explain to you in particular all that we have performed, to acquire a more exact knowledge for the future, of the motion of the ſtars, or to deliver memoirs to thoſe who deſign to penetrate farther into the ſecret myſteries of nature. This work, which is of too large an extent, to be compriſed within the compaſs of a ſingle letter, will ſerve for the ſubject of an intire volume, which we hope ſhortly to have the honour to preſent to you.

My deſign at preſent is only to give you a general idea of it, to the end, that, underſtanding before-hand the road we have hitherto kept, you may the better judge what is needful to be added, to make us exact, or to be altered, as to our method.

When we departed from Paris, with the inſtructions of the king, of his miniſters of ſtate, and of the academy royal, we propoſed to ourſelves nothing leſs than the perfection of natural ſciences; but, this project containing in it a great diverſity of matters, we ſuppoſed it convenient for every one to take his part, not only becauſe each of us had not leiſure enough to ply ſo many different ſtudies all at once, but alſo, becauſe the ſpirit of a man hath its limits, and it is very rare to find, in one and the ſame perſon, a genius equally proper for all things.

So that we agreed, that ſome of us ſhould addict ourſelves to aſtronomical obſervations, geometry, and to the examination of mechanical arts, whilſt others ſhould chiefly be taken up in the ſtudy of what relates to anatomy, knowledge of ſimples, hiſtory of animals, and other parts of natural philoſophy, which every one ſhould chuſe, according as his fancy led him; yet ſo, that even thoſe, who ſhould keep themſelves within the compaſs of any ſubject matter, ſhould, nevertheleſs, not neglect the reſt, when time, place, or perſons ſhould afford them occaſions to make any new diſcovery therein; we agreed likewiſe, that we ſhould mutually communicate our notions one to another, to the end, that each one might benefit by the common reflections, and withal, that nothing, if poſſible, ſhould eſcape our attention.

But let us take what care we could to ſucceed in this undertaking, we eaſily perceived, that ſix perſons buſied beſides in the ſtudy of languages, and in preaching the goſpel, could never be able to go through with ſuch a vaſt deſign; it therefore came into our mind, firſt of all, to engage the Europeans that were at that time in the Indies, but above all, the miſſionaries; to the end, that every one of us might concur in carrying on a deſign, equally beneficial and glorious to all nations. Secondly, to eſtabliſh, in divers places, ſome particular houſes, where our mathematicians and philoſophers ſhould labour after the example, and under the conduct of the academians of Paris; who from thence, as from the center of ſciences, might communicate their thoughts, their method, and their diſcoveries, and receive (if I may be ſo bold as to ſay ſo) as by reflection, our weak lights.

But theſe two expedients, ſo proper in themſelves for the promoting of our project, and withal capable to render France famous to poſterity, have hitherto proved ineffectual; on the one hand, we have found very little diſpoſition in other nations to ſecond us; on the other hand, the revolutions of Siam have overthrown our firſt obſervatory, which the king's liberality, and the zeal of the miniſters of ſtate, had in a manner quite finiſhed.

Theſe accidents, tho' fatal ones, did not yet diſcourage us; we had thoughts of laying the foundation of a ſecond obſervatory in China, ſtill more magnificent than that of Siam. It would have been no ſuch difficult matter to have built ſeveral others afterwards at Hiſpahan in Perſia, at Agria in the Mogul's country, in the iſle of Corneo under the line, Tartary, and in ſeveral other places, whoſe ſituation might facilitate the execution of our deſign; when that univerſal war, that has ſet all Europe on fire ſo many years, made us ſenſible of it in the Indies, and in one moment broke all our meaſures.

Perhaps, ſir, peace may put us into the ſame road again, that the tempeſt hath forced us to forſake, and that, all in good time, we ſhall enjoy a calm equally advantageous to religion, to the people's happineſs, and to the perfection of ſciences. In the mean time, as contrary winds do not hinder ſkilful pilots to go forward a little, notwithſtanding they do much retard their ſailing; ſo have we endeavoured, maugre all theſe tempeſts, to purſue our former deſign, and continue a work, the eſſay of which, as you may ſhortly ſee, will not perhaps be altogether unprofitable.

The difficulty that men have found from all antiquity, to regulate the motions of the ſtars, was never to be overcome; either by the lucubrations of ancient aſtronomers, or even by all the penetration of the neoterics; what endeavours ſoever our imagination may have uſed to dive into theſe myſteries of the omnipotent Creator, yet have we made but a ſorry progreſs; and we muſt needs confeſs, that heaven is at a much greater diſtance from our thoughts and conceptions, than it is elevated above our heads. Nothing can bring us nearer to it, than a continued ſeries of obſervations, and an exact inquiry into every thing that occurs in the ſtars, becauſe that this continual attention to their motions (making us perceive the groſs, and as it were palpable errors of ancient ſyſtems) gives occaſion to aſtronomers to reform them by little and little, and make them more conformable to obſervation; to this purpoſe, in theſe latter days, men have ſo carefully applied themſelves to the perfecting of inſtruments, pendulums, teleſcopes, and of whatſoever may any way bring the heavens nearer to our eyes.

In France, England, and Denmark, and in divers other places in the world, they have elevated huge machines, built magnificent towers, as it were, to ſerve inſtead of ſtairs to thoſe who would proceed in this new road; and the progreſs, that many obſervators have already made, is ſo conſiderable, that one may hope for great matters in future ages; provided princes do continue, by their liberality, to uphold ſuch a toilſome piece of work. This is, ſir, in general, what we have contributed towards it for our part.

Firſt of all, we have been moſt converſant in obſerving the eclipſes; and becauſe thoſe of the ſun have, more than all others, occaſioned people's admiration, we have been very diligent to improve all occaſions that might ſeem favourable to us. Amongſt thoſe that offered themſelves, there chanced to be two ſomewhat odd and particular, and will afford ſome delight to the curious.

The firſt was the eclipſe that happen'd about the end of April 1688; we knew that it was to be total in ſome parts of China, altho' at Pekin, where we ſojourned ſome time before, it was to be but indifferent great; for you know, ſir, there is a great difference between the eclipſes of the ſun and thoſe of the moon: the moon, that hath only a precarious light, is cover'd with real darkneſs, whenever the earth robs her of the ſun-beams, and doth not appear eclipſed to ſome certain people, but that ſhe at the ſame time hides her face from the eyes of others in like manner. The ſun, on the contrary, that is a body, of its own nature, always ſplendid, always luminous, or, rather, is light itſelf, can never be obfuſcated or darkened; and when the moon, by covering it, ſeems to deprive it of all its luſtre, it is not the ſun that is eclipſed, it is the earth; it is we indeed that do find ourſelves at that time all in darkneſs; ſo that aſtronomers would ſpeak more properly, if, inſtead of naming it an eclipſe of the ſun, they would name it an eclipſe of the earth.

Thence it comes to paſs, that this eclipſe is at the ſame time very different, according to the different regions where one is; inſomuch that if ſeveral obſervators, at a diſtance one from another, were placed upon the ſame line drawn from eaſt to weſt, it might ſo happen, that the firſt would ſee the whole body of the ſun, as it is commonly ſeen, whilſt the ſecond would diſcover but one part of it. There it would appear half covered, here it would be no more than an ark of light; and ſtill, farther off, it might perchance totally diſappear.

It is likewiſe for the ſame reaſon, that an obſervator, placed at the center of the earth, would not behold the ſun eclipſed, as we do here; now this difference, which they term the Parallax, would increaſe, or decreaſe, according as this luminary ſhould be more or leſs elevated above the horizon; this is what the Chineſe were hitherto ignorant of, and of which, to this day, they have but a very ſuperficial knowledge. As for the Indians, much leſs capable of being poliſh'd and refin'd than the Chineſe, they are always admiring ſuch wonderful effects; inſomuch that the king of Siam demanded one day, if the ſun in Europe was the ſame with theirs in the Indies, ſince it appeared at the ſame time ſo different in theſe two places.

Wherefore we departed on purpoſe from Pekin, to get to Hamcheu, a conſiderable city in the province of Chanſi; where, according to our calculation, the ſun was to be totally eclipſed: yet, it was not ſo, becauſe the longitude of the country was not yet perfectly known to us. The heavens were that day extremely ſerene, the place very convenient, our inſtrument fitly placed, and, being three obſervators, nothing was wanting that might render the obſervation exact.

Amongſt the different methods that may be made uſe of for theſe ſorts of operations, we made choice of two, that ſeem'd to us the moſt plain and eaſy; the one was to look upon the ſun, with a teleſcope of three feet long, in which they had placed, at the Focus objectivus, a Reticula or little net, compoſed of twelve little threads of raw ſilk, very ſmall, and equally diſtant one from another, yet ſo, that they might preciſely take up all the ſpace of the ſun, whoſe diameter appeared after this manner to the eye, divided into twelve equal parts.

The ſecond conſiſting in receiving the repreſentation of the ſun (by a teleſcope of twelve feet) that was painted upon a piece of paſteboard, oppoſite to the optick glaſs, at a proportionable diſtance; we had drawn upon the ſaid paſteboard twelve little concentrical circles, the biggeſt whereof was equal to the apparent diſcus of the ſun; ſo that it was eaſy for us to determine, not only the beginning, duration, and end of the eclipſe, which require no more but a ſingle optick glaſs, and a well regulated pendulum; but alſo its bigneſs, or (as they commonly call it) its quantity, and the time that the ſhadow, or rather the moon, ſpends in covering, or uncovering each part of the ſun: for notwithſtanding all theſe parts are equal amongſt themſelves, yet it doth not therefore follow, that there is requiſite an equal number of minutes to go over them, becauſe the continual change of the Parallax retards or puts forward the apparent motion of the moon.

There wanted but the twenty-fourth part to the total covering of the ſun, and we determined it to be an eclipſe of eight digits and an half (for ſo aſtronomers term it) for, to make their calculation juſt, they are wont to divide the apparent diameter of the planets into twelve digits, and every digit into ſixty minutes. In the mean time we obſerved firſt of all, that, when three quarters of the ſun were eclipſed, the day appeared in a manner not at all changed by it; nay, and we could hardly have perceiv'd it, if we had not had otherwiſe notice of it; ſo that an ordinary cloud was almoſt capable of producing the very ſame effect.

Secondly, tho' we did not, at the height of the eclipſe, ſee more than a little ark of light, yet might a man read very eaſily, in the court, the ſmalleſt character; I have ſeen ſome ſtorms that obſcured the heavens as much as they were at that time.

Thirdly, we could by no means diſcover any ſtar, tho' we endeavour'd it all we could; we only perceived Venus, which doth not denote any great obſcurity, ſince this planet appears oftentimes, even at ſuch time as the ſun is wholly riſen above the horizon.

The Chineſe, notwithſtanding, were terribly alarm'd, imagining that the earth was going ſuddenly to invelope in thick darkneſs. They made an hideous noiſe all abroad, to oblige the dragon to be gone. It is to this animal that they attribute all the diſappearances of the ſtars, which come to paſs, ſay they, becauſe the celeſtial dragon, being hunger-bit, holds at that time the ſun or moon faſt between his teeth, with a deſign to devour them.

At length the light returned by degrees, and eaſed the Chineſe of their trouble; but we continued our operation, comparing by different calculations the greatneſs, continuance, and ending of this eclipſe, with the different tables of ancient and modern aſtronomers. There were alſo made at Pekin, Hamcheu, and in ſeveral other cities of China, the very ſame obſervations, which might have ſerved to determine the longitude of all theſe different places, if we had not had more ſure and eaſier methods to know it by.

Upon the whole, this obſervation afforded an occaſion to make ſome reflections upon ſeveral other eclipſes, whereof authors ſpeak diverſly. Herodotus lib. 1. relates, that, upon the very day that the king of the Medes and the king of the Lydians fought a bloody battle, the ſun appeared totally eclipſed. The combate, ſaith he, laſted a long time with equal advantage on both ſides, till, all on a ſudden, thick darkneſs covered the earth, and for a while ſuſpended the fury of the ſoldiers. Father Petau hath placed this eclipſe in the year 597, before the birth of of our Saviour, on the 9th of July, altho' according to his calculation, it ought to be but of 9 digits 22 minutes; imagining, without doubt, that this portion of the ſun eclipſed was conſiderable enough to verify ſuch thick darkneſs which the hiſtorians mention: nevertheleſs, that is ſo far from ſufficing, that our laſt obſervation ought to convince us, that ſuch an indifferent eclipſe, as that was, could not ſo much as be ſeen by the combatants; ſo that it is much more probable, that this famous battle was fought in the year 585 on the 28th day of May, a day whereon there chanced to be a total eclipſe of the ſun.

Father Petau cannot diſagree with us about this laſt eclipſe, but, if we reckon it according to his tables, we ſhall find that it is but of 11 digits 20 minutes, that is to ſay, not quite ſo big as ours; and, for that reaſon, we may ſuppoſe his tables to be defective, becauſe the 24th part of the ſun ſufficeth (as we have obſerved) to make the day pretty clear; notwithſtanding, the hiſtory would make us believe that it was obſcure, yea, and even reſembling the darkeſt night.

In the year 310, before the birth of our Saviour, Agathocles king of Sicily, ſailing into Africa with his fleet, bound for Carthage, the ſun totally diſappeared, and the ſtars were ſeen every where, as if it had been mid-night; whereupon, divers aſtronomers, and particularly Ricciolus, are of opinion, that the tables that allow to this eclipſe a greatneſs, that comes pretty near that of the total, do ſufficiently make out the hiſtory: nevertheleſs, it is manifeſt by what we have obſerved, that the ſtars would never have been perceived, eſpecially in that brightneſs, and after that manner that Diodorus and Juſtin ſay they did, if ſo be there had been any ſenſible part of the ſun diſcovered, except this ſame part, not being eclipſed, had not been near the horizon, as it happened in the year 237, in the beginning of the reign of Gordianus junior; for at that time, the heavens were ſo darkened, that it was impoſſible to know one another without wax-tapers, at leaſt if we give credit to Julius Capitolinus.

The ſecond eclipſe we obſerved, ſtill more conſiderable than the former, was ſeen by father Tachard, in his voyage into the Indies, he was at ſea on board an Holland veſſel; and, if the place would have given him leave to make uſe of inſtruments, we ſhould never have ſeen any thing more ingenious on this ſubject.

The eclipſe appeared central, that is to ſay, the center of the moon, was quite oppoſite to the center of the ſun; but, becauſe the apparent diſcus of the ſun, was at that time bigger than that of the moon, there was ſeen in the heavens a bright ring, or a great circle of light, and what is moſt to be wondered at on this occaſion is, that father Tachard aſſures us, that this circle was at leaſt a finger's breadth, which would not agree, neither with the tables of ancient aſtronomers, nor of the moderns: but it is no ſuch eaſy matter, to make a juſt eſtimate of the bigneſs of luminous bodies, when one judges only upon view; becauſe the light that ſparkles, and reflects, cauſeth them evermore to appear much bigger than they really are.

However, theſe ſorts of eclipſes, which are called Annulary Eclipſes, are very rare; yea, and ſome mathematicians are of opinion, that there cannot be any at all, becauſe they ſuppoſe as a thing granted by all hands, that the diameter of the moon, even in its apogæum, that is, at its greateſt diſtance from the earth, was always either equal to that of the ſun, or even ſenſibly greater.

So likewiſe Kepler, writing to Clavius upon the account of an annulary eclipſe that they had obſerved at Rome on the 9th of April, in the year 1567, pretends, that this luminary border was nothing elſe but a little crown of condenſed air, enflamed or enlightened by the ſun-beams, broken or refracted in the atmoſphere of the moon. This laſt obſervation may be capable of undeceiving thoſe who may have perſiſted obſtinately to follow the like opinion, as well as to diſabuſe Gaſſendus's diſciples, who imagine that the ſun cannot overflow the moon above four minutes at moſt, that is to ſay, by its 180th part.

Beſides theſe two eclipſes, we have alſo ſeen ſome others of leſſer conſequence, which I ſhall forbear to mention, becauſe they contain nothing extraordinary. Thoſe of the moon have moſt employ'd our time, not only becauſe they are in a greater number, but becauſe there is greater difficulty to obſerve them well.

The brighter the ſun is, the more ſenſible is its defect, and the body of the moon, very obſcure and opake of itſelf, depriving us of the ſight of it, doth not permit us to doubt ſo much as one moment of the beginning or ending of its eclipſe ; but it is not ſo with the moon, that does not loſe its light but by degrees, and by an almoſt inſenſible diminution. As the experience we have of it makes us better perceive all theſe difficulties, than the moſt profound ſpeculations ; will you pleaſe, ſir, to let me acquaint you, in few words, what perplexes us moſt, as to this point.

The earth, in its different aſpects it bears to the ſun, hath always one half of its globe enlightened ; whilſt its other hemiſphere muſt needs be in darkneſs, like a bowl that is enlightened by a wax-candle by night ; ſo that on one ſide there is a projection, as it were a long tail of ſhadow, in faſhion of a cone, the point whereof is very far extended, and loſeth itſelf at length in the vaſt extent of air.

When therefore the moon, by its particular motion, paſſes thro' this tenebrous ſpace, ſhe loſeth her light, and becomes obſcure herſelf; but now, if we could mark the very moment wherein ſhe enters into it and comes out again, we ſhould know exactly the beginning and ending of the eclipſe, but ſeveral accidents, that happen at that time, do not ſuffer us to obſerve it with ſo great niceneſs.

Firſt of all, a long time before the moon touches the ſhadow I but juſt now mentioned, its oriental border is enlightened only by a ſmall portion of the ſun, which the earth deprives her of by little and little, and by piece-meal; ſo that, at that time, there is to be ſeen a kind of ſmoke that ſpreads abroad inſenſibly upon the body of the moon, which often precedes the real ſhadow a quarter of an hour; and, being this ſmoke always increaſes according as the eclipſe approaches, it is ſo confounded and mixed with the beginning of the ſhadow, that it is almoſt impoſſible to diſtinguiſh it from it; ſo that neither experience nor application, nor yet the beſt teleſcopes, can hinder an able obſervator from miſtaking ſometimes one minute, nay, and ſometimes two.

Secondly, when I ſay, that the eclipſe is cauſed by the interpoſition of the terreſtrial globe, it is not that the moon is then plunged into its ſhadow, which never reaches farther than 50,000 leagues, ſuppoſing the earth's diameter to be 1146 ſea leagues, whereas the moon, even in her perigæum, is above 57,000 leagues from the earth; but the globe of the earth being encompaſſed with a thick and groſs air, which we call its Atmoſphere, which the rays cannot quite penetrate, there is cauſed by the interpoſition of thoſe vapours a new ſhadow, whoſe diameter and length do far ſurpaſs the true ſhadow of the earth. Now theſe vapours are ſo much the more tranſparent, as they are the more remote from us; whence it comes to paſs, that they alſo make a more faint ſhadow at the beginning and end of the eclipſe, and conſequently, they do not afford that liberty to obſervators, to determine them with any exactneſs.

You may underſtand by that, ſir, why we often diſcover the moon, yea, at the very height of the eclipſe, ſo far as to diſtinguiſh her ſmalleſt ſpots; why ſhe paints herſelf at that time in ſo various colours, for ſhe appears red, aſh-coloured, iron-grey, bluiſh, or ſomewhat inclining to yellow, inſomuch that ſhe ſeems to be herſelf ſenſible of her failings, and ſhews certain ſigns of her different paſſions. You ſee on the contrary, why in ſome certain eclipſes ſhe totally diſappears, and ſteals quite out of our ſight. All this does, no queſtion, happen from the nature of this atmoſphere, which changes perpetually, and thereby produces theſe different effects.

In the third place, when the moon begins to grow dark near the horizon, it is yet more difficult to obſerve well the beginning of it; and a man muſt take ſpecial notice, that the time of this apparent beginning, compared with the time of its ending, doth not give him the middle of the eclipſe exactly, becauſe the vapours are much more groſs at the horizon, than they are at 30 or 40 degrees of elevation.

Fourthly, altho' the direct rays of the ſun do not paſs thro' the atmoſphere of the earth, yet are there a great many of them, that turning aſide, or, as they ſpeak, by being broken by refraction, may enlighten the border of the moon, and conſequently hinder the ſhadow from being exactly terminated.

Fifthly, it ſometimes cometh to paſs, that the ſhadow begins to touch the oriental edge of the moon, at the place where the ſpots are more obſcure than thoſe of the occidental border, which makes, that a man cannot judge equally of the end and the beginning; we owe, ſir, all this refining of aſtronomy to the modern obſervators: the ancients went more roundly to work in this matter, and Tycho Brahe himſelf did not yet hit of it with all his ſubtilty.

But the moderns have been more ingenious to find out theſe difficulties, than to find out an expedient to ſurmount them; and we have more than once experienced in our obſervations, that it is not without extreme trouble, that one arrives at that exactneſs, which is required by the learned of our age; yet, have we this advantage, that we are a great many obſervators together, and that we are able, by communicating our notions and doubts one to another, to come nearer the truth. Beſides, the heavens have ſupplied us with a great many eclipſes of the moon; and, there have but few years paſſed, but we might have obſerved one or two.

But, amongſt this great number, that, which happened on the eleventh of December 1685, was the moſt favourable to us; we were at that time at Siam: The king, to whom we had predicted it, and who deſired to try the goodneſs of our tables, was ſo ſurpriſed by conferring what he did behold with our prediction, that, from that time, he had ſome thoughts of detaining us near his perſon; or, at leaſt to ſend ſomebody to find out ſome French aſtronomer in Europe for him. He offered of his own accord to build a magnificent obſervatory for us at Louveau, to render aſtronomy, if poſſible, as famous in India, as it was become in Europe, ſince the eſtabliſhment of the royal obſervatory in Paris. And certainly, if ever the ſtars were the preſage of future events, all the heavens ſeemed then to promiſe us a happy ſucceſs in this new undertaking; but it is not the ſenſible courſe of the planets, that rules our deſtinies here below; they proceed from an higher over-ruling power, and all their conſequences are written in that myſterious book of divine providence, which before all ages hath determined the different events of this world.

This project of the king of Siam, ſo favourable to France, to natural ſciences, and to religion, was quickly put in execution; but the death of that good prince overthrew it almoſt in an inſtant, and changed the face of all things. The troubles, that then aroſe, forced our mathematician miſſionaries to abſent themſelves, and thereby cauſed, if I may ſo ſay, a kind of an eclipſe, which hath ſo long deprived thoſe people of the European ſciences, and light of the goſpel: yet, theſe clouds begin to be diſpelled. They are very earneſt to have us come back again; but we have learned by woful experience, not to rely too much upon the good will of man, but to place all our confidence in him, who alone can, when it ſeems good to him, bring light out of darkneſs.

This laſt eſſay, for all that, hath been of ſome uſe to aſtronomy; and we can aſſure you, that the lunar eclipſes obſerved at Siam, Louveau, Pontichery, Pekin, Nankim, Kiam-chau, and at Canton, with ſeveral other places of the Eaſt, will not only contribute to the regulating the celeſtial motions, but likewiſe to the perfecting geography.

Altho' the ſcience of comets be not of ſo grand a conſequence, yet it is not leſs admirable; nay, methinks the curioſity of the learned ſhould be ſo much the more ſpurred on to attempt ſomething in this way, as it is more difficult to ſatisfy it as to this point, for it is more than probable, that the wit of man will not be able in a long time to dive into the bottom of theſe marvellous phœnomena.

Comets are ſo rare, of ſo ſhort continuance, and ſo different amongſt themſelves, that, if they be new bodies that are formed and deſtroyed in the heavens, it is very hard, and in a manner impoſſible to lay down general rules of their motions, or to prognoſticate their appearance and continuance, if they be real planets.

We have had the opportunity to obſerve two of them, the firſt was ſeen in a province in the kingdom of Siam, on the confines of Camboje, towards the ſea-coaſt. It was in the month of Auguſt 1686. It cut the equator, paſſing from north to ſouth, in the 111th degree of right aſcenſion; and its own particular motion, that brought it ſtill near the ſun, quite abſorp'd it, at leaſt, into the ſun-beams.

The ſecond appeared at Pontichery, Molucca, and Pekin, in the month of December 1689. Its motion was contrary to that of the former, it removed from the ſun, and came nearer to the ſouthern pole, running over the conſtellations, Lupus and Centaurus, where it diſappeared in the beginning of January to the enſuing year.

If we have but a ſmattering in the ſcience of comets, yet in recompence we are ſufficiently inſtructed in what relates to planets; and what our aſtronomers have diſcovered at Paris, ſince the eſtabliſhment of the obſervatory, is already matter of comfort to us, for the negligence or ignorance of the ancients.

Amongſt the different ways of going to work how to determine their place in the heavens, the moſt plain, and withal the moſt exact, is, to take notice of their conjunction with the fix'd ſtars. It is near a thouſand years ago, that Saturn, the higheſt of all the planets, appear'd cloſe by the equator, and near a ſtar of the third magnitude, ſituated in the ſouthern ſhoulder of Virgo. Tycho, in his time, obſerved it in the ſame ſign; and we alſo have ſeen it near Spica Virginis, but with this advantage, that the teleſcopes, we made uſe of, make our obſervations incomparably more exact, than thoſe of the ancients; who, for that purpoſe, made only uſe of their naked eye, always defective, at ſuch a great diſtance, eſpecially in reſpect of the ſtars, whoſe apparent diameter is augmented by the light, and by a kind of Coma of ſparkling rays, according to the language of aſtronomers, that reflect from their whole body, which makes it many times appear where indeed it is not.

Whereas a good teleſcope makes them leſs glittering, rounds them, gives them their true bigneſs, and ſo approaches them to the eyes, that one does likewiſe diſtinguiſh them from one another, even when they touch one another at the edges, or borders, and when they are juſt upon uniting together.

Thus we determined the place of Mars, by the approaching of two ſtars of the Scorpion's head, that of the moon, by her conjunction with the Antares, or heart of the Scorpion, and that of Venus, that paſſed near a ſtar of the third magnitude belonging to the ſame ſign.

This conjunction of Jupiter and Mars, that happen'd about the end of February 1687, did alſo take up ſeveral days; we were at that time at Louveau, where the king of Siam, who took a pride in aſtronomy, did obſerve it in perſon with an earneſtneſs and uneaſineſs, that ſhewed more of ſuperſtition than natural curioſity.

He had a fancy that this conjunction would be fatal to him, and that it was an aſſured prognoſtication of his death. We endeavour'd, but all in vain, to undeceive him, by M. Conſtance, his principal miniſter of ſtate, whom we made apprehenſive, that the events of this lower world have no communication with the particular motion of the planets; and, that altho' our deſtiny ſhould depend thereon, yet the king was no more concern'd in it than the moſt abject of his ſubjects, for whom the ſun and the ſtars do as well turn round, as for the greateſt potentate upon earth.

Neverthleſs theſe reaſons, nor abundance of others, could not ſet him to rights: he ſtill maintain'd, that his reign was not to laſt long, and that he ſhould be a dead man within a few days: in effect he died the next year; but it was in vain for him to ſeek for the cauſe of his death in the heavens, which he carried about him for ſeveral years; an habitual diſtemper did extremely trouble him at that very time; and that, without doubt, was the true ground of his fear and prediction.

I do not know, ſir, whether or no theſe obſervations will appear ſingular and odd to you; yet methinks, this, at leaſt, which I am going to have the honour of relating to you, does a little deſerve your attention.

You know that Mercury hitherto hath been the leaſt known, and (if I may ſo ſay) the leaſt tractable of all the planets; always abſorped in the rays of the ſun, or in the vapours of the horizon, he continually flies, it ſeems, all the courtings and careſſes of aſtronomers, who are put to as much trouble to fix him in the heavens, as chymiſts are to fix their mercury upon earth.

We read in the life of Charlemagne, that the mathematicians of his times, deſpairing of ever being able to obſerve him well, when he was the fartheſt remote from the ſun, endeavoured to find him in the ſun itſelf, under which they ſuſpected he might ſometimes paſs: they ſuppoſed they had there found him in the month of April 807, or rather 808, except the hiſtorian counted the beginning of the year at that time from Eaſter; in effect, a black ſpot appeared in the ſun eight days, tho' his going in and coming out were hinder'd by a cloud.

I wonder this obſervation could have been able to make them judge that this was Mercury, who is ſo far from ſpending eight days in running over ſuch a little ſpace, that he muſt, according to his natural courſe, finiſh it in a very few hours ; beſides that, it is utterly impoſſible for a man to perceive him in the ſun, without the help of a teleſcope, and that too a very good one. What therefore they then ſaw, or ſuppoſed to ſee, was, without doubt, a ſpot, not unlike thoſe that have ſo often appeared ſince, but bigger than ordinary, and conſpicuous enough to be diſcover'd by the bare ſight.

Gaſſendus was more fortunate, Anno 1631, on the ſeventh of November. The obſervation he made of it hath rendered him ſo famous, that ſome authors, to do him honour, have dedicated their books to him, as a perſon to whom aſtronomy was infinitely obliged ; ſome others alſo have ſignaliz'd themſelves by this curious diſquiſition ; we are the laſt that have had occaſion to imitate them, but our obſervation peradventure may not deſerve the meaneſt eſteem of all thoſe which have been made.

We were at Canton, a maritime town of China, and pretty well known by the Europeans traffick ; we applied ourſelves to the particular ſtudying of the motion of this planet, and that made us judge, that it would not be altogether impoſſible to diſcover it in the ſun, on the tenth day of November 1690; to that end we prepared two excellent teleſcopes, the one of five feet, that bore a Reticula equal to the diameter, divided into twelve equal parts, and the other of twelve feet, with its Reticula compoſed of four threads, one whereof repreſented a parallel, the other the meridian, and the two others cut them at the angle of forty-five degrees ; we alſo rectified our pendulums : beſides all this, the heavens were exceeding clear and ſerene ; and bating the wind, which was a little violent, we could wiſh for nothing to the exactneſs of our obſervation.

Mercury appeared to us like a black point or ſpeck, which, entering into the body of the ſun, run over it, in three hours and a half, or thereabouts; we exactly obſerved its time, entrance, departure, its diſtance from the ecliptick, its apparent ſwiftneſs, longitude and diameter. We underſtood likewiſe by that, with the greateſt certainty in the world, that this planet hath no proper light of its own; that its body is opake, and that it is, at leaſt, ſometimes leſs diſtant from us than the ſun, the which could not formerly be determined but only by conjecture.

We owe, ſir, theſe fine diſcoveries to the invention of optick-glaſſes and teleſcopes, as we do a great many other things, which in theſe latter ages are the ſubject of the new aſtronomy; ſo that as, by means of microſcopes, we multiply the moſt ſimple bodies, and magnify the moſt minute and almoſt inſenſible ones; ſo likewiſe,by help of theſe teleſcopes, we approach to our eyes the moſt diſtant objects, and do abridge thoſe infinite ſpaces that ſeparate the firmament from the earth; art having in a manner forced nature to ſuffer men to have free commerce with heaven for time to come, and let mathematicians enter more eaſily into a kind of ſociety with the ſtars.

We find, at preſent, mountains and precipices in the moon, we diſcern its leaſt ſhadows, that increaſe or decreaſe, according to the different poſture of the ſun; we meaſure the Maculæ of planets, we have a ſhrewd gueſs of their colours, latitudes, and of their circular motion about their center. It is by that, that men have perceived that prodigious ring that appeared in the air, ſuſpended about Saturn in form of a vault, or like a bridge, that would encompaſs the whole earth without arches, without piles, without any other ſupport, beſides the uniform weight, and perfect continuity of its parts.

Gallileo, and many other aſtronomers, have in vain put their brains on the rack to explain this myſtery; they look'd upon this planet as another Proteus, always changing, always differing from itſelf; to day round, then oval, bye and bye armed with two Anſa's or handles, that open or ſhut, according to the time of the revolution; or elſe accompanied with two little ſtars, that vaulted up and down without ever forſaking it: laſtly, cut in the middle with a broad Faſcia or ſwathing-band, whoſe extremities were extended far beyond its ſphere.

We have a long time examined this wonderful work of the omnipotence of our Creator; and, notwithſtanding we cannot but admire M. Hugens's ingenuity, who hath reduced to ſuch a plain and facile ſyſtem all theſe ſeeming irregularities, yet for all that, we muſt confeſs that we are ignorant of much more of it than that learned aſtronomer was able to diſcover to us.

It is leſs difficult to explain the different figures of Mars, Mercury, and Venus, which appeared to us ſometimes round, ſometimes gibboſe, ſometimes dicotomiſed, and ever and anon in faſhion of a bow, or ſickle; and the truth is, when Venus approaches the ſun, and when ſhe is beſides in her Perigæon, ſhe appears in the teleſcope ſo little different from the new moon, that it is very eaſy for one to commit a miſtake.

I do remember, that cauſing a Chineſe to obſerve it in this poſture, who had but little ſkill in aſtronomical ſecrets, he did no longer doubt, but preſently gave his aſſent; and making him at the ſame time take notice of the moon, at a place in the heavens not far remote, he cried out for joy, and told me then, that he now comprehended that which had always perplex'd him : *I did not know,* ſays he ſeriouſly, *how the moon could change faces ſo often, and appear ſometimes in the wax, and ſometimes in the wane*; *but now I perceive it is a body compoſed of ſeveral parts, which ſometimes are taken in pieces, and then join'd together again after ſome certain times, for to day, at leaſt, I ſee one half of it on one ſide, and one half on the other.*

The knowledge alſo that we have acquired by teleſcopes, concerning the number of the ſtars, is likewiſe more curious. That large Faſcia that embraces almoſt the whole heavens, which they commonly call, for whiteneſs, the Milky-way, is a Congeries of an infinite number of minute ſtars, each one of which, in particular, hath not ſtrength enough to affect our eyes; no more can the Nebuloſæ, whoſe dim and confuſed light is like to a little cloud, or head of a comet, yet it is compounded of ſeveral ſtars; ſo they reckon thirty-ſix of them in that of Præſepe Cancri, twenty-one in that of Orion, forty in the Pleiades, twelve in the ſingle ſtar that makes the middle of the ſword of Orion, five hundred in the extent of two degrees of the ſame conſtellation, and two thouſand five hundred in the whole ſign; which hath given occaſion to ſome to imagine, that the number of them is infinite.

At leaſt it is true, that the prodigious bigneſs of each ſtar, which, according to ſome, differ but little from the ſun; that is to ſay, whoſe globe is perhaps a thouſand times bigger than that of the earth, which nevertheleſs appears but as a point in the heavens, ought to convince us of the vaſt extent of this univerſe, and of the infinite power of its Author.

I cannot, ſir, finiſh this diſcourſe, before I have ſpoken of ſome obſervations we have made of the Satellites: theſe are ſo many little planets that belong to the train of bigger ones, which were detected n our age; they continually turn about Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, *&c.* ſome nearer, and ſome farther off from the center of their motion; they ſculk ſometimes behind their body, ſometimes again they are plunged into their ſhadow, from whence they come out more ſplendid; nay, it even happens, that when they are between the ſun and their planet, they eclipſe one part of it. I have ſometimes beheld, with a great deal of delight, a black point, that run upon the diſcus of Jupiter, which one would have taken for a blemiſh, yet in effect was nothing elſe but the ſhadow of one of theſe Satellites, that cauſed an eclipſe upon its globe, as the moon does upon the earth, when by her interpoſition ſhe deprives it of the ſun's light. We do not know for what particular uſe nature hath deſigned theſe Satellites in the heavens, but that, which we aſtronomers make uſe of them, is very uſeful for the perfection of geography; and ſince M. Caſſini hath communicated his tables to the obſervators, one may eaſily, and in a very ſmall time, determine the longitude of the principal cities of the world; inſomuch that, if the irregular motion of ſhips would permit us to make uſe of the teleſcopes at ſea, the ſcience of navigation would be perfect enough to make long voyages with a great deal of ſafety.

We have obſerved the immerſions and emerſions of the Satellites Jovis at Siam, Louveau, Pontichery, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in ſeveral cities of China; but the obſervations made at Nimpo and Chamhay, that are the moſt eaſtern cities, have reduced the great continent to its true limits, by cutting off above five hundred leagues from the country, that never ſubſiſted but in the imagination of the ancient geographers.

Since, ſir, I ſpeak of what reſpects the perfection of geography, I ſhall tell you moreover, that we have taken ſome pains to determine the latitude of coaſts, ports, and the moſt conſiderable cities of the Eaſt, by two other methods. Firſt, by a great number of obſervations about meridian altitudes of the ſun and ſtars. Secondly, by divers maps and ſea charts, that our voyages have given us occaſion to invent or perfect. I have a Ruttier, or directory, for finding out the courſe of a veſſel from Nimpo to Pekin, and from Pekin to Hamcheu, where we have omited nothing that may any way contribute to the perfect knowing of the country, ſo that the particularities of it are in my opinion too large; nay, and even too troubleſome to thoſe, who, in theſe ſorts of relations, do rather ſeek after delight than profit.

I have alſo by me the courſe of the rivers that lead from Nankim to Canton, it is the work of two or three months, and a tedious one too I'll aſſure you, when one would do things to purpoſe: the map is eighteen feet long, and each minute takes up above four lines, or the third part of an inch; ſo that all the bye ways, the breadth of the river, the ſmalleſt iſlands, and leaſt cities are there exactly and accurately ſet down. We had always the ſea compaſs in our hand, and we always took care to obſerve, ever and anon upon the road, the meridian altitude of every particular ſtar, to correct our eſtimate, and determine more exactly the latitude of the principal cities of the country.

Whereupon, ſir, I cannot forbear making ſome reflections in this place, which may one day be uſeful perhaps for the reſolving a material problem in phyſick. Men are not yet ſure, whether all ſeas in the world be upon the level one with another. The generous principles of ſound philoſophy will have it, that all liquors of the ſame kind, that communicate one with another, do ſpread uniformly, whether by their own weight, or by the preſſion of the air; and at laſt take the ſame ſurface. Moſt of the experiments are in this point pretty congruous to reaſon; yet, ſome later reflections have ſtarted a doubt whether or no the ſea had not really ſome inclination, and were not more elevated in ſome certain places than in others. What I have remarked, touching this laſt map I but now mentioned, ſeems to back this laſt opinion.

For, in the provinces of Canton and Kiamſi, is to be ſeen a mountain, out of which iſſue two rivers; the one flows towards the ſouth, and, after it has watered fifty leagues of the country, it diſimbogues into the ſea near the city of Yamtcheu; the other flows contrary, viz. to the north, croſſes ſeveral provinces for the ſpace of two hundred leagues, and turns aſide inſenſibly, and enters into the eaſt ſea, or ſea of Japan, inſomuch that the emboucheurs or mouths of the two rivers are not diſtant from one another (if you do but even follow the coaſts that ſeparate them) above three hundred leagues or thereabouts.

Nevertheleſs, the northern river ſeems more rapid in its whole courſe, than that of the ſouth, and being beſides four times longer, it muſt needs be that the ſeas, where both of them meet, have a different elevation, or, which is the ſame thing, are not upon the ſelf ſame level.

I ſhall not ſpeak, ſir, of ſeveral other maps, wherein we have reformed part of the coaſts of Coromandel, of Peſcherie, Molucca, Mergui, and of Camboje, becauſe they have not yet attained to that perfection, that we hope we may be able to give them hereafter. But yet I have two of them that at preſent may venture to come abroad; the one repreſents the entrance into the port of Nimpo, the moſt dangerous in all the world, by reaſon of the multitude of iſles and rocks that cover it on all ſides, and put the ſkilfulleſt pilots to a ſtand. We have ſubjoined thereto the courſe from Siam to China, with a proſpect of the chief coaſts, or iſles that are not met with by the way.

The other is ſtill more curious, and indeed the only one in its kind; the little occaſion the Europeans have hitherto had to ſail into the great Tartan, obliged geographers to make uſe, in their deſcriptions of it, of I know not what memorandums, ſo little conſiſtent with truth, that, as far as I ſee, they have purpoſely ſet themſelves to deprive us of the knowledge of it. But the war breaking out ſome years ago, between the emperor of China and the duke of Muſcovy, they have on all ſides diligently examined the limits of realms, the bigneſs of provinces, the fertility of lands, rivers, mountains, deſarts, and whatſoever could any way be advantageous to theſe two provinces, and might conduce, in time to come, to conclude a ſolid and laſting peace between them.

Beſides theſe memoires that fell into father Gerbillon's hands, the father hath alſo taken ſeveral journies of three or four hundred leagues into the very heart of the country; going ſometimes towards the weſt, ſometimes to the ſouth, obſerving, as much as poſſibly could be, the longitude and latitude of the moſt remarkable places; ſo that the map, that he hath drawn out, begins at preſent to ſupply us with a right idea of the diſpoſition and ſituation of this vaſt country.

Amongſt the things that are moſt ſingular in that country, one may obſerve a ridge of mountains, that are extended ſo far into the ſea between the eaſt and north, that it hath been, to this day, almoſt impoſſible for mariners to know or to double its cape; which makes ſome ſuſpect, that this part of Aſia may peradventure be at this place contiguous to the firm land of America. We have, beſides all this, made ſeveral obſervations concerning the variation of the needle upon tides, upon the length of a ſingle pendulum, which may however contribute ſomething to the perfection of arts and ſciences.

Yet theſe general obſervations have not ſo much taken up our time but that we have ſpared ſome to examine what there is in the Eaſt moſt curious, in the way of natural philoſophy, anatomy, and botany.

Our ſojourning at Siam afforded us an opportunity to view ſeveral particular animals, which we ſeldom or never ſee in Europe; as for example, the elephant, the nature of which we have deſcribed, as alſo its docibleneſs, ſtrength, courage, dexterity, the interior and exterior contexture of all its parts; together with divers other properties, that the very people of that country, that are accuſtomed to them, cannot chuſe but admire.

There have we ſeen tigers, much different from thoſe that are ſometimes to be ſeen in France, and other countries; whether you look upon the colour, which is reddiſh fallow, interlaced with large black ſtreaks, or whether you reſpect the bigneſs, which ſometimes is equal to the bigneſs of horſes; they call them Royal Tigers: thoſe they call Water Tigers do exactly reſemble a cat. They live upon fiſh, but do commonly live in woods, or upon the banks of rivers.

There are likewiſe to be ſeen your rhinoceros's, one of the oddeſt animals in the world, in my opinion; it hath ſomereſemblance with a wild boar, only it is a little bigger, the feet of it ſomewhat thicker, and the body more clouterly ſhaped; its hide is covered all over with thick large ſcales, of a blackiſh colour, of an extraordinary hardneſs: they are divided into little ſquares or buttons, riſing about a quarter of an inch above the ſkin, in a manner like thoſe of the crocodile; its legs ſeem to be engaged in a kind of boot, and its head wrapped about behind with a flat capuche, or monk's hood; which made the Portugueſe to call him the Indian Monk: its head is thick and groſs, its mouth not wide, its muzzle thruſt out and armed with a long thick horn that makes him terrible to the very tigers, buffalo's, and elephants.

But that, which ſeems the moſt admirable in this animal, is its tongue, which nature hath covered with ſuch a rough membrane, that it differs but little from a file, ſo that it fleas off the ſkin of all that it licks. In a word, as we ſee ſome animals here that make a good ragouſt of thiſtles, whoſe little pricks tickle the fibres or the extremities of the nerves of the tongue; ſo likewiſe your rhinoceros takes delight in eating branches of trees, armed on all ſides with ſtiff thorns: I have often given it ſome of them, whoſe prickles were very hard and long, and I admired how cunningly and greedily it bended them immediately, and champed them in its mouth without doing itſelf any harm. 'Tis true indeed, they ſometimes drew blood of him, but that very thing made them more pleaſant to the taſte; and theſe little ſlight wounds made probably no other impreſſion upon its tongue, than ſalt and pepper does upon ours.

What is to be ſeen, in the iſle of Borneo, is yet more remarkable, and ſurpaſſeth all that ever the hiſtory of animals hath hitherto related to be moſt admirable. The people of the country aſſure us, as a thing notoriouſly known to be true, that they find in the woods a ſort of beaſt called the Savage-man, whoſe ſhape, ſtature, countenance, arms, legs, and other members of the body are ſo like ours, that, excepting the voice only, one ſhould have much ado not to reckon them equally men with certain Barbarians in Africa, who do not much differ from beaſts.

This wild, or Savage-man, of whom I ſpeak, is endued with extraordinary ſtrength, and notwithſtanding he walks but upon two legs, yet is he ſo ſwift of foot, that they have much ado to outrun him. People of quality courſe him as we do ſtags here, and this ſort of hunting is the king's uſual divertiſement. His ſkin is all hairy, his eyes ſunk in his head, his countenance ſtern and tanned; but all his lineaments are pretty proportionable, altho' harſh and thickened by the ſun. I learned all theſe particulars from one of our chief French merchants, who hath remained ſome time upon the iſland; nevertheleſs, I do not believe a man ought to give much credit to ſuch ſorts of relations, neither muſt we altogether reject them as fabulous; but wait, till the unanimous teſtimonies of ſeveral travellers may more particularly acquaint us with the truth of it.

Paſſing upon a time from China to the coaſt of Coramandel, I did myſelf ſee, in the ſtreights of Molucca, a kind of ape, that might make pretty credible that which I juſt now related concerning the Savage-man.

It marches naturally upon its two hind feet, which it bends a little, like a dog's that hath been taught to dance; it makes uſe of its two arms as we do; its viſage is in a manner as well favoured as theirs of the Cape of Good Hope; but the body is all over covered with a white, black, or grey wool; as to the reſt, it cries exactly like a child; the whole outward action is ſo human, and the paſſions ſo lively and ſignificant, that dumb men can ſcarce expreſs better their conceptions and appetites. They do eſpecially appear to be of a very kind nature; and, to ſhew their affections to perſons they know and love, they embrace them, and kiſs them with tranſports that ſurprize a man. They have alſo a certain motion, that we meet not with in any beaſt, very proper to children, that is, to make a noiſe with their feet for joy or ſpite, when one gives or refuſes them what they paſſionately long for.

Altho' they be very big (for that I ſaw was at leaſt four feet high) their nimbleneſs and ſlight is incredible: It is pleaſure beyond expreſſion to ſee them run up the tackling of a ſhip, where they ſometimes play as if they had a particular knack of vaulting to themſelves, or, as if they had been paid, like our rope-dancers, to divert the company.

Sometimes, ſuſpended by one arm, they poiſe themſelves for ſome time negligently to try themſelves, and then turn, all on the ſudden, round about a rope with as much quickneſs as a wheel, or a ſling that is once put in motion; ſometimes holding the rope ſucceſſively with their long fingers, and letting their whole body fall into the air, they run full ſpeed from one to the other, and come back again with the ſame ſwiftneſs. There is no poſture but they imitate, nor motion but they perform; bending themſelves like a bow, rolling like a bowl, hanging by the hands, feet, and teeth, according to the different fancies which their whimſical imagination ſupplies them with, which they act in the moſt diverting manner imaginable; but their agility to fling themſelves from one rope to another, at thirty and fifty feet diſtance, is yet more ſurpriſing.

So likewiſe, that we might the oftener have this paſtime, we cauſed five or ſix of our powder-monkies, or cabbin-boys trained up to this way of climbing up the cords to follow them; then, our apes cut ſuch prodigious capers, and ſlid with ſo much cunningneſs along the maſts, ſail-yards, and tackling of the ſhip, that they ſeemed rather to fly than run, ſo much did their agility ſurpaſs all that ever we have obſerved in other animals.

Crocodiles being little known in Europe, and ſo common in the Indies, it has been our care to examine their property and whole ſtructure. Peradventure, ſir, our former diſſections will be of ſome uſe hereafter, for the project they laid, and carried on pretty far in the academy, for the perfecting of anatomy. We have added thereto ſome anatomical remarks accompanied with figures about the Tockaies, ſo named, becauſe they pronounce very frequently and diſtinctly this word. They are huge lizards or ſmall crocodiles, found all over the woods in Siam, as alſo in the fields, and in houſes.

The cameleon is likewiſe another ſort of lizard of between eight and ten inches in length, which ſerved for a ſubject to our obſervations; there are of them to be ſeen upon the coaſt of Coromandel, and we breed of them at our houſe in Pontichery, for they do not live upon air alone, as ſome naturaliſts have written, for they eat, and that very greedily. 'Tis true indeed, that, being of a very cold and moiſt temper, they can paſs ſeveral days without aliment; but at the long-run, if you give them none at all, you ſhall ſee them dwindle away by degrees, and at laſt die for hunger.

Upon the whole, every thing is very odd in the cameleon, its eyes, head, and belly are exceeding big; and altho' it hath four parts, as a lizard, yet is it ſo very ſlow in all its motions, that it crawls rather than goes; and, if nature had not beſtowed upon it a tongue of a particular contexture, it could never catch the animals, in which does conſiſt its nouriſhment: this tongue is round, thick, and at leaſt a foot in length, it darts this tongue ſeven or eight inches out of its mouth with a marvellous ſlight: now the ſubſtance of it is ſo viſcous, that it detains flies, graſhoppers, and other ſuch like inſects, if it touch them but never ſo lightly with its tip.

Its body is cover'd all over with a very fine ſkin, but is of a changeable colour, according to the various paſſions that agitate it: in joy it is of an emerald green mix'd with orange, etched with little grey and black ſtrokes; choler makes it duſky and livid; fear pale, and of a faded yellow: by times all theſe colours, and many more, are confounded together, and at times there is compoſed ſuch a pretty medley of ſhade and light, that nature does not afford a finer variety of ſhadowing, nor our fineſt pictures more lively, ſweet, and proportional drawing.

They let me ſee likewiſe at Pontichery two other kinds of animals little known in Europe; the one is called Chien marron, that takes after the dog, wolf, and fox almoſt equally: it is of an indifferent bigneſs, the hair is grey and reddiſh, it hath ſhort taper'd ears, the ſnout ſharp, the leg high, a long tail, a body ſlender and well ſhaped; it does not bark like dogs, but cries juſt as infants do: in a word, it is naturally voracious, and, when hunger pinches it, it enters into houſes in the night, and falls upon people.

The ſecond ſort is the Mangoure, which, as to its exterior ſhape, comes very near the weezel, except only that its body is longer and bigger, the legs ſhorter, the ſnout ſlenderer, the eye quicker, and ſomewhat leſs wild.

This animal really is very familiar, and there is no dog that plays and fawns more prettily with a man than this creature; nevertheleſs it is angry, and not to be truſted when it eats, always ſnarling at that time, and falls furiouſly upon thoſe who will be troubling it.

It loves hens eggs more than any thing; but, becauſe its chaps are not wide enough to ſeize on them, it ſtrives to break them by throwing them aloft, or by rolling them an hundred ways upon the ground: but, if there chance to be a ſtone in its way, it preſently lies upon it with its face downward, and, ſtriding with its hinder legs, it takes the egg in its fore legs, and thruſts it with all its might under its belly, till it be broken againſt the ſtone.

It does not only hunt rats and mice, but ſerpents, to whom it is a mortal enemy, which it takes by the head ſo cunningly, that it receives no hurt by it. It is at no leſs enmity with cameleons, which at the very ſight of it are ſeized with ſo mortal a fear, that they become immediately as flat as a flounder, and fall down half dead; whereas at the approach of a cat, or dog, or ſome other more terrible animal, they ſwell, are enraged, and betake themſelves either to their own defence, or to aſſault them.

India being a very hot country, and withal moiſt, produces a great number of other animals; there is there eſpecially abundance of ſerpents of all ſizes, and ſo pretty in reſpect of the variety of colours, that, if it were not for the natural antipathy that we have for this kind of beaſt, I ſcarce know any thing that the eye could take greater delight in. The people of Siam are not ſo nice as we in this reſpect; they catch a prodigious number of them in the woods, and expoſe them to ſale in the markets like eels.

Yet there is a particular kind of them that they do not eat, they are preſent poiſon, and that without relief; they call them Cobra capela: ſome others are ſhort, and of a triangular form, ſo that they always creep upon one of their three faces; others alſo are ſtill more odd, have no tail, their extremities are terminated by two heads exactly alike in appearance, but very different in effect, inaſmuch as the one hath not, as the other, the common uſe of its organs; for in theſe latter the lips are join'd, the ears ſtopp'd, the eye-lids quite cover the eyes, whilſt the other eats, ſees, hears, and guides all the reſt of the body.

Yet an Engliſhman at Madras, who kept one in his houſe for curioſity ſake, aſſured me, that every ſix months the organs of this ſecond head diſcloſed by little and little, and that, on the contrary, thoſe of the oppoſite head, by cloſing themſelves, ceaſed to perform their ordinary functions; that at the end of the like number of months, they were both reſtored to their priſtine ſtate, and divided in that manner between them, each in its turn, the care and government of the machine.

But God being no leſs wonderful in the leaſt things than he is in the greateſt, there are a prodigious number of inſects that might deſerve the moſt ſerious reflections. There you may ſee certain flies that nature hath painted of ſuch a lively yellow, ſo poliſh'd and ſhining, that the moſt curious gilding does not come near it. Some others are but points of light, that always glow, and emit rays all night long; all the air appears as if ſet on fire with it when they fly; and, when they light upon leaves or branches, the trees reſemble, afar off, thoſe fire-works they make in the Indies for ſolemn illuminations.

Their white piſmires, every where to be found, what care ſoever men take to deſtroy them, are very famous by reaſon of the great inconveniences they produce, and for their natural properties; they are exceeding ſmall, of a ſoft ſubſtance, white, and ſometimes a little ruſſety; they are multiplied ad infinitum; and, whenſoever they are once got into an houſe or apartment, nothing but the black piſmires can drive them out; they have ſuch ſharp teeth, and ſo penetrating, that they not only pierce through, in one night, the greateſt bails, cloth, wool, ſilk, and all other ſtuffs, but even cabinets and cupboards, the wood of which becomes in a few days all worm-eaten; they even ſpoil wood, copper, and ſilver, upon which you may ſometimes diſcern the ſigns and marks of their little teeth: notwithſtanding all this, there is great probability that this effect proceeds more from the particular quality of the Saliva, which is a kind of diſſolving Menſtruum, and acts at that time much after the ſame manner as Aqua fortis does here upon our metals.

Even the graſhoppers are extraordinary; there are ſome of them in Siam that breed upon the boughs of trees, and are, if I may venture to ſay ſo, their fruit in a manner; for the leaves, preſerving their natural figure and colour, grow ſomewhat thicker, their ſides throw out on each hand a kind of green filaments, in faſhion of long legs, one of the extremities of the leaf extends like a tail, and the other waxes round like a head, all which, at length, is animated, and metamorphoſed into a graſhopper: this is what the people of the country report, who pluck them from the branches themſelves; we have ſeen great ſtore of them, and it is true that the leaf appears intire with its fibres, or at leaſt nothing does more reſemble a leaf than the body of this animal. If this be true, this tree is no leſs to be wonder'd at than that whoſe leaves dropping into the ſea, in a ſhort time, turn to Soland geeſe, as ſome naturaliſts would make us believe.

It would here be a fit place to ſpeak to you concerning the ſtrange trees we have met with in the Eaſt, but, if I am not miſtaken, I have had formerly the honour to diſcourſe with you about them at large, eſpecially of thoſe that produce varniſh, tea, cotton, tallow, pepper, and many others, all of them ſingular in their kind, and very profitable for commerce.

I have had alſo the honour, ſir, to preſent you with about four hundred China plants, drawn out in their natural colours, and copied after thoſe that are kept in the cloſet of the emperor of China: This is it that does chiefly compoſe the herbal of China, and which, doubtleſs, will enrich ours, eſpecially when we ſhall have the tranſlation of the book where the vertues and uſe of all theſe ſimples are incomparably well explained.

Neither ſhall I enlarge more upon our obſervations that relate to the beauty, bigneſs, and diverſity of Indian birds; for, altho' that may be the fineſt part of the hiſtory of animals, yet there has been ſo much ſaid of it already in the foregoing relations, that it would be to no purpoſe to ſpeak to you of it more at large.

But I cannot forbear now in the concluſion to relate to you the greateſt curioſities which the ſea hath furniſhed us with. There are fiſh, whoſe blood is as hot as that of a man, others reſpire in the air like other terreſtrial animals; we ſee ſome of them fly like birds, that croak at the bottom of waters like toads, and bark like dogs: ſome have heads pretty like ours; they call them in Siam, Mermaids: in ſome certain ones the fleſh is ſo firm, that it nouriſheth as much as meat; in others, it is ſo ſoft, that it may not ſo properly be called fiſh, as an indigeſtedneſs of ſlimy, groſs, and tranſparent matter, wherein no organ is to be diſcerned, yet is it quick, it moves, and even ſwims methodically. In a word, altho' the moſt part of them be good to eat, yet I have ſeen ſome that are poiſonous, which infallibly lame the fiſhermen when they can ſtrike their fins into them.

I forbear all the other wonders of the ſea, that no ways come ſhort of thoſe in the heavens and in the earth, that I may ſpeak more particularly of what we have learned of the birth, nature, and fiſhing of pearl. You may aſſure yourſelf, that theſe are of that kind of deſcription upon which the publick may rely; for we derive them from the fountain head. This is what father Bouchet, the miſſionary of Madure, ſent by the king into the Indies, left me his own ſelf in writing.

Men know well enough, that pearls are engendered in a ſort of oiſter found in the Indies, between cape Comarin and the channel de la Croux, which occaſioned the giving the name de la Peſcherie, or the Fiſhery to the whole coaſt: This fiſhing is exceeding chargeable, whether it be that it continues three whole months without any intermiſſion, or whether it be that they are ſometimes forced to employ above an hundred and fifty men therein all at once; ſo that, before they engage in it for good and all, they begin upon trial, from whence they can tell, more or leſs, what profit they may poſſibly hope for.

Now, if the pearls of the firſt oiſter be fair, big, and in great number, then the whole body of fiſhers are in a readineſs againſt the 15th of March, the time when the Paravas (people of that coaſt) do always begin that precious fiſhing. In the laſt, there are but eight hundred barques, yet ſometimes there are to be ſeen to the number of three thouſand. At that time the Hollanders arm two pataches, to convoy the fleet, and defend them from pirates.

The crew of each barque conſiſts of fifty or ſixty mariners, amongſt whom there are twenty divers, each of which hath his two aſſiſtants, which for that reaſon they call the Fiſher Aſſiſtants: In fine, the gain is diſtributed after the following manner; each diver is bound to pay ſix crowns to the Hollanders, which hath ſometimes amounted to a million. Every eight days, they fiſh one whole day for the profit of the ſkipper of the barque; the firſt throw of the nets is for him; they give the third part of what remains to the aſſiſtants, and the ſurplus belongs to the divers; but yet, the Hollanders do not always give them leave to diſpoſe of it as they pleaſe. So that theſe poor wretches do often complain of their hard fate, and bewail their loſs, when they think of the time they lived under the the dominion of the Portugueſe.

When fiſhing-time is come, this is the manner of the Paravas's preparing themſelves for it: The whole fleet puts out to ſea as far as ſeven, eight, or ten fathom water, off of certain huge mountains, which they diſcover far up in the country; they have learned by experience, that this is the moſt commodious latitude of the coaſt, and the place where there is the moſt copious fiſhing.

Soon after caſting anchor, every diver faſtens under his belly a good big ſtone ſix inches diameter, a foot long, cut archwiſe on that ſide which is applied to his ſkin; they make uſe of it as ballaſt, that they may not be carried away by the motion of the water, and to go more firmly through the waves; beſides that, they tie a ſecond heavy one to one of their feet, that preſently ſinks them to the bottom of the ſea, from whence they quickly draw it into the barque by help of a ſmall cord: but becauſe the oiſters are often fixed to the rocks, they ſurround their fingers with copper plates for fear of hurting them in pulling the oiſters with violence; ſome others alſo uſe iron forks for the ſame purpoſe.

Laſtly, every diver carries a great net, in faſhion of a ſack, hung about his neck by a long rope, the end of which is faſtened to the ſide of the barques; the ſack is deſigned to receive the oiſters they pick up during the fiſhing, and the rope to draw up the fiſhers when they have filled their ſack.

In this equipage they precipitate themſelves, and go down into the ſea above ſixty feet deep. Since they muſt loſe no time, ſo ſoon as they touch the bottom, they run to and fro upon the ſand, upon a ſlimy earth, and amongſt the craggy rocks, ſnatching haſtily the oiſters they meet with in their way.

At what depth ſoever they be, the light is ſo great that they diſcern what happens in the ſea, as eaſily as tho' they were upon land. They ſometimes ſee monſtrous fiſh, from which the chriſtians defend themſelves by croſſing themſelves; which hitherto hath preſerved from all accidents. For, as for thoſe who are Mahometans or Pagans, whatſoever ſhift they make by troubling the water, or flying away, to avoid them, many have been devoured by them; and, of all the dangers in fiſhing, this is, without all doubt, the moſt ordinary and greateſt.

In fine, the expert divers remain commonly under water half an hour, others are no leſs than a a good quarter of an hour. They do no more but hold their breath, without uſing, for that purpoſe, either oil, or any other liquor; cuſtom and nature having endued them with that power, which all the art of philoſophers hath not been able to this day to communicate to us.

When they perceive they can hold no longer, they pull the rope to which their ſack is faſtened, and tie themſelves very faſt to it by their hands; then, the two aſſiſtants, that are in the barque, hoiſt them aloft in the air, and unload them of what they have got, which is ſometimes five hundred oiſters, ſometimes fifty or an hundred only, according to their good or bad luck. Amongſt the divers, ſome reſt a little to refreſh themſelves in the air; others do not require it, and incontinently plunge again into the water, continuing in that manner this violent exerciſe without reſpite, for they feed but twice a-day, once in the morning, before they put to ſea, and in the evening when night forces them to make to ſhore.

It is upon this ſhore where they unload all the barques, and the oiſters are carried into a great many little pits digged into the ſand, about five or ſix feet ſquare. The heaps they throw in riſe ſometimes to the height of a man, and look like a company of little huts, that one would take at a diſtance for an army ranged in battalia.

They leave the oiſters in this manner, till ſuch time as the rain, wind, or ſun, forces them to open of themſelves; which ſoon kills them, the meat corrupts and grows dry, and they pull out the pearls very eaſily; ſo that they all fall into the pit. According as they pull out the mother of pearl, ſo they call the ſhells, on the outſide like thoſe of your common oiſters; but within more like ſilver, and more glittering: the largeſt are near as big as your hand; the meat is very delicate, and, if the pearls there found be, according to the opinion of ſome phyſicians, certain ſtones, that are bred by the ill conſtitution of the oiſter's body, as it happens in men, and in the bezoar, this diſtemper does not ſenſibly alter the humours thereof; at leaſt the Paravas, that eat of them, find not any difference between thoſe that have pearls, and thoſe that have none.

When they have cleanſed the ditch of its moſt groſs filth, they ſift the ſame over and over again, to ſeparate the pearls from it. Nevertheleſs, what care ſoever they take, abundance of them are loſt; and, altho' they return often thither, yet they ſtill find them, in a pretty conſiderable number, ſome years after the fiſhing.

And this is all, ſir, that reſpects the place, and ordering of this rich fiſhing. I ſhall add ſome other particulars, that will ſerve more fully to inform you of the nature and quality of pearls.

They are found ſcattered here and there in the whole ſubſtance of the oiſter, in the vail that covers it, in the circular muſcles that terminate there in the ventricle, and, in general, in all the carnous and muſculous parts; ſo that it is not probable that they be in the oiſter, what the eggs are in the hen, and ſpawn in fiſh: for beſides, that nature hath not determined them any particular place for to be formed in, anatomiſts, who have carefully examined this matter, can diſcover nothing that hath any analogy with that which happens in reſpect of other animals.

One may, nevertheleſs, ſay, that whereas there are in a pullet an infinite number of eggs in form of ſeed, one of which grows and augments, whilſt the others remain in a manner in the ſame ſtate: ſo likewiſe in each oiſter may be commonly obſerved one pearl bigger, better formed, which ſooner comes to perfection than all the reſt. But this pearl hath no fixed place, and it is ſometimes in one place, and ſometimes in another. Yea, and it ſometimes ſo falls out, that this pearl becomes ſo big, that it hinders the mother of pearl to cloſe, and then the oiſter dies and corrupts.

The number of the pearls is no leſs indefinite, oftentimes all the meat of the oyſter is ſet thick with them; but it is a rare thing to find more than two of them of any tolerable bigneſs.

They are naturally white, more or leſs according to the quality of the mother. The yellow and the black are extraordinary rare, and of ſmall value; yet Tavernier reports, that he had ſix of them given him in the Indies that were perfectly black, reſembling jet, and much eſteemed in the country. If this author doth not intend to impoſe upon us in this point, as he doth in many others, perhaps he was deceived himſelf: however, it is moſt certain, that, all along the coaſt of La Peſcherie, they make no account of them; and the fiſhermen themſelves throw them away, as good for nothing.

This variety of colours is, without doubt, cauſed in the pearls, by the different parts of the oiſter where they are formed; ſo that when chance or nature hath directed the ſeed into the meſentery and liver, or, rather into the parts that are inſtead of them: (For there hath been obſerved in an oiſter a cavity large enough, where are diſcovered two overtures, that terminate at two ſmall membranes, where the chyle is chiefly purified, and diſcharges itſelf of all its groſs particles; the inteſtines of this animal not being accompanied with lacteal and meſariac veins.) When, I ſay, the part is incloſed in theſe cavities, and bile and impurities of the blood may very well alter the natural whiteneſs, and make them either yellow or black, ſo likewiſe one may obſerve, that theſe pearls are not tranſparent, but ſullied, and loaden with a groſs ſubſtance.

As to what relates to their exterior form, it is ſufficiently known, ſeeing they are as common in Europe as in the Indies. Their different figure gives them different names; ſo we ſay, a pearl in point, or in pear; oval pearl, round pearl, barroque pearl, that is, flat on one ſide and round on the other; one may add irregular pearl; for ſome of them are found with many little angles, gibbous, flat, and generally in all ſorts of figures.

Upon the whole, if it be a difficult thing to give an account how pearls grow in oiſters, it is no leſs difficult to underſtand the manner how oiſters are generated in the ſea. Some ſay it fares with this ſort of fiſh as with all others, that produce eggs, the exterior ſubſtance whereof, ſoft at firſt, and viſcous, grows hard at laſt by degrees, and turns to a ſhell.

What the Paravas have obſerved, and which I will inform you, deſerves to be carefully minded.

At the times when rain falls, the brooks of the adjacent lands, that empty themſelves all along the Weſt, flow near two leagues upon the ſurface of the ſea, without mixing with it: This water does thus ſwim above ſome time, keeping its natural colour, but it clots afterwards by the heat of the ſun, which reduceth it into a kind of light tranſparent cream. Soon after it is divided into an infinite number of parts, every one of which ſeems animated, and moves up and down like ſo many little inſects. The fiſh ſometimes catch ſome of them as they float, but as ſoon as they taſte of them they quickly leave them.

Of what nature ſoever theſe minute animals may be, certain it is, that they engender upon the ſurface of the water; their ſkin grows thick, hard, and becomes laſt of all ſo ponderous, that they deſcend by their own proper weight to the bottom of the ſea. The Paravas do moreover aſſure us, that they aſſume at laſt the form of an oiſter.

This is a ſyſtem whereof the vertuoſo's did probably never dream, which experience hath diſcovered to the Barbarians; and, in effect, it is in theſe places only that pearl is found, and the rainieſt years prove likewiſe the beſt for fiſhing.

I ſhall add moreover, to undeceive thoſe who are wedded to that opinion of the ancients, that oiſters remain always at the bottom of the ſea. Formerly it was believed they roſe every morning up to the ſurface of the water; and that they open'd their nacre, or ſhell, to receive in the dew of heaven, which, like a melted pearl, inſinuated itſelf into the meat of the oiſter; was fix'd by means of its ſalts, and there at laſt aſſumed the colour, figure, and hardneſs of pearls; not much unlike ſome certain liquors that are tranſmuted into cryſtals in the earth, or as ſome flowers are transformed into honey and wax in the bee-hives: all this is ingenious and pretty; but the worſt of it is, 'tis all falſe; for theſe oiſters are ſtrongly faſtened to the rock, and never did any fiſher ſee one to float upon the ſuperficies of the water.

Notwithſtanding pearls are found in ſeveral places, yet thoſe of La Peſcherie are the moſt valued, for they never loſe their luſtre; others turn yellow, or of a pale decayed white. As to the true value it is very hard to determine any thing for certain; the biggeſt of all, that was found in the laſt fiſhing, was ſold but at ſix hundred crowns.

I have ſometimes aſked the divers, if they did not now and then find coral at the bottom of the ſea; they anſwered, that they, being for the moſt part buſied in what concerns ſeeking for pearl, took no great notice of any thing beſides; that, nevertheleſs, they found, from time to time, branches of black coral: there is ſome of it, added they, which altho' it be pretty hard at the bottom of the water, yet becomes much more ſo, when it hath been ſome time expoſed to the air: but the greateſt part of it hath acquir'd, even in the ſea, all its natural hardneſs. It ſticks faſt to the rocks, and when we caſt anchor in foggy weather, it often happens that our anchor catches hold on ſome branches of black coral, and brings along with it whole trees; but it is very rare to find any red coral all along the coaſt of La Peſcherie.

I ſhall here make a reflection that not many have made, viz. That the coral-tree hath no root: ſome of it was ſhown in Rome, in father Kercher's Muſæum, that ſprung out of ſeveral ſtones; ſome of them have been after that pull'd away, and the coral had not only no root, but was not ſo much as tied by any fibre, or any the leaſt filament whatſoever. There alſo were ſeen ſeveral branches of coral iſſuing from a nacre of pearl; and in cardinal Barbarin's cloſet, there is ſtill to be ſeen a ſhrub of coral, whoſe foot is black, the trunk white, and the very top of all red.

Thus doth nature, ſir, diſport herſelf in the great abyſs, as well as in the other parts of the univerſe, by the production of prodigious numbers of things equally profitable and precious, which ſhe beſtows not to excite and irritate mens concupiſcence, or to foment their ſottiſh pride, but to ſerve them for ornaments, as reaſon, and the decency of every ſtate requires or permits.

Nay, perhaps, ſir, theſe beauties of the univerſe were created, not ſo much to adorn the body, as to exerciſe the mind: *Reliquit mundum diſputationi eorum.* For, of all natural pleaſures, the moſt innocent, and ſubſtantial, without all doubt is the ſtudy of nature, and the conſideration of the marvels it contains in its womb. When one hath once run over the ground work of divine wiſdom, and penetrated into the myſteries of it; this general view of ſo many beauties hath more powerful charms, and begets in our ſpirit a more taking and affecting image and repreſentation, than all that the ſenſes and paſſions are ever able to preſent to us.

You know it, ſir, better than any body; you, I ſay, who by your particular ſtudy, and your continual correſpondence with the learned, have acquir'd, in ſo ſhort time, ſo many notions in all the different kinds of erudition; and certainly, that conſtant application that you every day afford, in reference to the perfection of arts and ſciences, ſufficiently declares, that nothing can more profitably and pleaſantly take up the time of a gentleman and honeſt man.

But what is ſtill more ſingular, you ſanctify all this knowledge, by the good improvement you make of it: you bring it, I may ſo ſay, to the ſanctuary; you make uſe of it in the pulpit of truth, to make our myſteries more intelligible, and, not ſatisfied with the ordinary philoſophy and eloquence, you do thereby become a chriſtian philoſopher, and an evangelical orator. I am with all reſpect,

S I R,

Your moſt humble

and moſt obedient Servant,

L. J.

FINIS.

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